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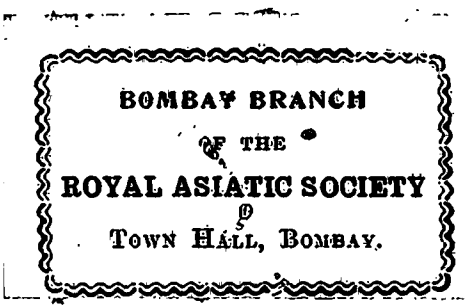

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Jeanne D'Albret
Queen of Navarre.

London, Hurst & Blackett 1865.

THE LIFE OF

JEANNE D'ALBRET,

QUEEN OF NAVARRE.

FROM NUMEROUS UNPUBLISHED SOURCES,
INCLUDING MS. DOCUMENTS IN THE BIBLIOTHEQUE IMPERIALE,
AND THE ARCHIVES ESPAGNOLES DE SIMANCAS.

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BY

MARTHA WALKER FREER,

AUTHOR OF

"THE LIFE OF MARGUERITE D'ANGOULEME."

"Pax certa, Victoria integra, Mors honesta."
LÉGENDE DE JEANNE D'ALBRET.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

THE Life of Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre, forms almost a necessary sequel to the history of her mother, Queen Marguerite d'Angoulême. The maintenance of the controversy between the Romish and the Reformed churches, so ably promoted by Marguerite, fell almost by right of heritage to Jeanne d'Albret. The career of the latter presents a rare example of signal talent combined with integrity, and a moderation which neither success, nor reverses the most grievous had power to shake. Misfortune proved the permanent heritage of Queen Jeanne: but her resignation, and lofty courage sustained her through every trial. Her unsparing, and active foes were Catherine de Medici, and Philip II., King of Spain. The despatches of Philip's ambassadors testify how vindictive was his persecution of a princess, who, to the crime of heresy, united an indisputable claim to the kingdom of Navarre, wrested from her ancestors by the Spanish crown. As a wife, a mother, and a sovereign, Jeanne beheld the usurpation of her rights by others: yet amid injuries of such magnitude, her conduct offers so admirable an example of forbearance, as must assign to her an eminent rank in the records of good and

honourable women, whose virtues have benefited and adorned the world.

The letters written by the Queen of Navarre referred to, or given entire in the following pages, have been hitherto unpublished, with the exception of three letters only: also, nearly the whole of the state documents quoted. The Spanish Archives of Simancas, the Manuscripts of the Bibliothèque Impériale, and the Cottonian and Harleian collections of MSS. in the British Museum, have afforded information of high and varied interest for the biography of Jeanne d'Albret; and have thrown important lights on the political history of the times.

The Author has, also, made diligent research in the works of the historians of France and Spain contemporary with the Queen of Navarre.

The Memoir of Jeanne d'Albret, published by Mademoiselle Vauvilliers in 1823—the only history of the Queen of Navarre which has before appeared—has supplied the author with some few personal anecdotes of Queen Jeanne.

The Author desires, likewise, to acknowledge herself indebted to the learning and research of M. Louis Paris, of the Bibliothèque Impériale, for many valuable inedited documents connected with the Life of the Queen of Navarre, and courteously communicated.

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THE

LIFE OF JEANNE D'ALBRET.

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JEANNE D'ALBRET was born in the palace of Fontainebleau on the 7th day of January, 1528.

She was the eldest child of Henry II., king of Navarre, and of Marguerite d'Angoulême, sister of Francis I., king of France. At the period of Jeanne's birth, Marguerite was residing in retirement at Fontainebleau with her mother, Louise de Savoye, duchesse d'Angoulême, the king of Navarre being absent from his consort, on pressing affairs connected with the levying of finances in the duchy of Berry, for the government of his brother-in-law, king Francis. Throughout the period of her pregnancy, the health of Marguerite occasioned serious alarm to her royal relatives. She had been harassed by a constant cough; and her depression of spirits produced the worst possible effect upon her health, and defeated the unremitting endeavours

of her physician, the learned Maître Jehan Goinret, to afford her alleviation.

Queen Marguerite's depression was chiefly occasioned by her unavoidable separation from her brother; and her anxiety at the adverse condition of public affairs, when her own failing health prevented her from offering the king that political aid, and consolation, which the attachment subsisting between them prompted. At the time when the birth of Marguerite's infant was expected, the armies of Francis, in league with Henry VIII., king of England, and with pope Clement VII., were ravaging Italy. The treaty of Madrid—that most unjust and arbitrary of compacts—not meeting with implicit acceptance by Francis and his people, on the king's return from captivity in 1526, the emperor Charles V., had angrily rejected compromise, and detaining in rigorous captivity the young dauphin and his brother the duke of Orleans, again commenced an exterminating warfare on the plains of Italy, in opposition to the armies of the League, fighting under the French and Papal banners.

Constant was the correspondence maintained at this time between the royal brother and sister, both in prose and in verse.[1] Marguerite cherished the hope that Francis would find leisure to quit Paris, and the political conferences which so greatly absorbed him, in time to receive her expected babe at its birth.

A few days only before her *accouchement*, the queen wrote thus to her brother:—"I assure you, Monseigneur, that the fear I feel at the result of my approaching trial—which I dread as much as, for many reasons,

[1] Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême, queen of Navarre, vol. I.

I earnestly desire it—is almost converted into certain hope, seeing my sorrow so affects you, that to relieve it, you would even sacrifice the health so dear to me, and in comparison of which I esteem my life as nothing; nor, can I endure pain so great as that which would befal me, did any harm happen to you. I hope, nevertheless, that God will permit me to see you before my hour arrives: but if this happiness is not to be mine, I will cause your letter to be read to me, instead of the life of Sainte Marguerite, as, being written by your hand, it will not fail to inspire me with courage. I cannot, however, believe that my child will presume to be born without your command; to the last, therefore, I shall eagerly expect your much desired arrival."[1] The pressure of public affairs permitted not the king's absence from Paris: he, however, despatched Goinret and his first physician, Noël Ramard, to remain with his sister, until she was convalescent: both of these learned doctors were in attendance on Francis himself, whose health, since his illness at Madrid, had never recovered its vigour. On Tuesday, January 7th, queen Marguerite was safely delivered of a daughter, in the presence of the duchesse d'Angoulême, who received the babe in her arms from the midwife. There were also present at the birth of the princess Jeanne, Madame de Silly, baillive de Caen,[2] and Madame la Sénéchale de Grammont, ladies of honour to the queen of Navarre; also, a woman of the

[1] Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême, vol. II., p. 42.

[2] Aymée de la Fayette, widow of François de Silly, seigneur de Lonray, and de Fay, gentleman of the chamber to the king, bailiff and captain of Caen.

bed-chamber, who bears the singular appellation of Madame Dartigaloube. A courier was despatched to carry the happy tidings of the birth of his infant niece, and the safety of his sister, to Francis, whose anxiety on this occasion is represented to have been excessive. The king wrote letters of congratulation in return to Marguerite, conveying the gratifying assurance that her child would henceforth hold the same place in his affection as did his own daughters, Mesdames Madelaine, and Marguerite de France—a promise which Francis ever afterwards faithfully remembered.

The king of Navarre, at the period of his daughter's birth, was sojourning in the town of Bourges, in Berry. A missive from the duchesse d'Angoulême apprized him of his consort's safety. Never was intelligence received with more thankful joy; for the precarious health of Marguerite had occasioned Henry serious solicitude.

Queen Marguerite's faithful friend Aymée de la Fayette, baillive de Caen, was appointed governess to the infant princess. At a very early period of her existence, Jeanne began to display symptoms of the energetic temperament for which she was afterwards so renowned; and her royal mother was continually cheered during the period of her convalescence, by reports of the vigorous health, and the beauty of the new-born babe. When Jeanne was little more than nine days old, she was privately baptised in the chapel of the Holy Trinity, in the palace of Fontainebleau. Her sponsors were, king Francis, who was represented by proxy, the duchesse d'Angoulême, and one of the sisters of the king of Navarre, probably Madame Isabel d'Albret,

Henry's favourite sister. The unsettled state of public affairs, and the absence of the king prevented any display of pomp on this occasion. The little Jeanne, moreover, was not a royal daughter of France; neither, at the period of her birth did it appear probable that she would eventually inherit the territories and royal title of her ancient house. Consequently, there has been no official record preserved of the solemnities observed on the occasion of her baptism.

The nativity of the princess Jeanne de Navarre, meantime, gave occasion to many jests and sarcasms amongst the Spanish people, who were at once the most independent and obsequious of the varied races which acknowledged the sway of the emperor Charles V. The resentment of the Spanish against king Francis, for his evasion of the treaty of Madrid, exceeded all bounds. By this treaty, Francis had pledged himself not to afford the king of Navarre aid or countenance, in his endeavours to re-conquer the kingdom of Spanish Navarre, which had been wrested from Henry's mother, Catherine, by the victorious arms of Ferdinand the Catholic, in virtue of a papal interdict, launched in 1512, by Julius II.—a pontiff, whose savage enthusiasm for war and bloodshed, sent dismay to the heart of the most ardent of Rome's adherents. This stipulation, which so deeply affected the interests of the new-born princess, like the remaining clauses of the treaty, remained unfulfilled. Francis, nevertheless, carefully supported his rejection of the various articles of the treaty, with the formalities which so grave a decision required; and the refusal to put into execution each stipulation, was skil-

fully made to emanate from the parties most concerned by its import, rather than from the fiat of Francis himself. Thus, a few weeks before the birth of Jeanne, a summons from the privy-council was addressed to her father, in conformity with the treaty of Madrid, requiring the king to execute a deed renouncing the ancient heritage of his house in favour of the emperor, and his heirs for ever; and also to relinquish the title of king of Navarre. As Francis expected, Henri d'Albret returned a peremptory refusal to these demands. In his answer, which is addressed to the privy-council, Henry declared, "that, desiring above all things to give contentment to the king, if a demand had been made to him to cede his personal wealth to the said sieur the king, he would give his majesty *carte blanche* to dispose of that at pleasure; but he prayed his majesty to consider, that these were demands which concerned the ancient patrimony of the House of Navarre, on the maternal side, the which, as he could not relinquish them without incurring the just reprobation of his heirs and successors, he prayed the said sieur the king, not to take ill his positive refusal to comply with such a proposal."[1] The indignation of the emperor was great; and he made many scoffing observations on the improbability that any serious command addressed by the sovereign of France to his subject, the prince of Béarn, would be met by defiance so determined. The birth of Henry's child, the presumptive heiress of his claims on Spanish Navarre, was, therefore, far from affording satisfaction to Charles. His dislike for queen Marguerite,

[1] MS. Bibliothèque Royale.—Inedited.

added to his knowledge of the power that she exercised over her brother's mind, increased the emperor's disquietude. "*Milagro! la vaca hizo una oveja!*" satirically exclaimed Charles' subjects, when they heard of the birth of the princess Jeanne, in allusion to the arms of Béarn, which quartered two cows on a field *or*. The usual *soubriquet* which the Spaniards gave to Henri d'Albret, was that of *el vaquero*—the cowherd.[1]

When Jeanne was a month old, she was committed to the sole care of the baillive de Caen, who departed with her charge from Fontainebleau to Lonray, a castle close to Alençon. This was Madame de Silly's usual residence, when not in attendance on her royal mistress. The constitution of the princess was strong and healthy. Her courage, as she grew older, astonished every one; and her frolicsome disposition kept her *gouvernante* in a state of perpetual excitement. In accordance with the wise directions of queen Marguerite, none of the vexatious restrictions, which in those days surrounded the children of royal personages, were suffered to depress the joyous disposition of the little Jeanne. Her childhood was spent in pleasant companionship with the children of Madame de Silly: living at a distance from the court, the character of the princess suffered no injury from the homage which there would have surrounded Marguerite's daughter, child as she was; while her principles sustained not the shock of early initiation with the profligacy of the courtiers. Often did Madame de Silly speak to Jeanne of her royal mother; she told her of Marguerite's goodness, of the love which every one bore

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire, p. 105.

her, and of the queen's efforts, when at Madrid, to procure the liberation of king François from captivity. These lessons sank deep into the heart of the princess; her veneration for her mother became, at length, a leading trait of her character, and influenced many important events of her subsequent life.

Often, however, did Marguerite quit the court, and take up her abode at the castle of Alençon, to be near her child, and to watch over the progress of her education. The little Jeanne would then bound, with wild delight, into the arms of her beautiful and gifted mother, whose eventful history had become the theme of her childish emulation. Queen Marguerite often alludes, in her correspondence, to the vivacity of her daughter's character, and to the quickness of intellect which early distinguished her from her youthful companions.

When the princess Jeanne had attained the age of two years and a half, queen Marguerite gave birth, at Blois, to a son, July, 1530. The infant was sent to Lonray, to be brought up by the baillive de Caen; but, to the indescribable grief of his parents, the prince survived only five months, and died at Alençon, in the arms of queen Marguerite. By this event, Jeanne again recovered her position, as heiress presumptive of Navarre and Béarn. But, fortunate would it have been for her had it never been her fate to succeed to a heritage contested from her birth, and fraught with perils during the troublous days impending over France.

Jeanne remained at Lonray until she had completed her fifth year. During this period, she made occasional

visits to the court of her royal uncle, at St. Germain, who caressed the beautiful child, and so overwhelmed her with indulgences, that, but for her noble disposition, this favour might have proved most injurious. The king of Navarre, likewise, took great pride in his youthful daughter, and never tired of watching her infantine sports. But it was Henry's lot always to find a formidable competitor, in Francis I., for the affection of those most dear to him; and, won by the gracious kindness of her magnificent uncle, the child evinced extraordinary attachment for Francis; and a passionate burst of tears generally testified her resentment, when her arms were with difficulty unclasped from round his neck, and she was carried from the presence. The little madame Jeanne, therefore, the darling and plaything of her royal father, and of her uncle, was distinguished at court by the name of *la mignonne des rois*;[1] and the greatest nobles of the kingdom requested, as an especial favour, that their own daughters might be selected as companions for the youthful princess.

After the decease of the duchesse d'Angoulême, in 1531, Marguerite and her husband announced their intention to leave the court of France for a season, and to reside within their own dominions at Pau. Henry's frequent residence at St. Germain was a necessity entailed by his alliance with the sister of his sovereign; though the obligation was not the less felt by him to be one intolerably irksome. The *amour-propre* of the king of Navarre was continually wounded by a sense

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire.

of his dependence on the will of his brother-in-law; he felt that his royal rank scarce gave him pre-eminence over the princely aristocracy which thronged the court of Francis. The king, while he shared his diadem with Marguerite, reluctantly permitted king Henry to receive the homage which the latter derived from his proximity to the throne. With jealous indignation, Francis repressed any disposition, on the part of the king of Navarre, to exercise conjugal influence over the actions of Marguerite. While sojourning in the royal palaces of the Valois, Francis willed that La Marguerite des Marguerites should acknowledge no other sceptre than his own; yet, profound as was the attachment which the queen of Navarre felt for the king, she often voluntarily retired from the French court, and sought, in her husband's society, a happiness more tranquil, and, probably, more complete, than that which she partook of amid the splendid pageantries she shared with her brother.

Marguerite, therefore, yielded cordial assent to her husband's desire to visit his dominions. She had, moreover, important private reasons for quitting Paris;[1] and so urgently did she entreat the permission of the king, that Francis at length reluctantly signified his assent to the departure of the royal pair. As Marguerite and her husband contemplated a residence of eighteen months in Béarn, it was their desire to take the princess Jeanne, and present her to her future subjects. Francis, however, peremptorily refused to allow the princess to leave his kingdom; and he de-

[1] Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême, vol. II., p. 156.

clared that her education must be completed in France, under his own direction. The persuasions of her brother soon prevailed upon Marguerite to declare her acquiescence in this design. Her devotion to the will of Francis never swerved; she was, besides, sensible of the many advantages which must follow this virtual adoption of her daughter by the king. Not so, however, the king of Navarre. He was aware that the motive which prompted Francis to this arbitrary act, was distrust of his fidelity to the interests of France. Jeanne was the presumptive heiress of her father's dominions, in the south of France—comprehending the principality of Béarn, and the counties of Foix, Armagnac, Albret, Bigorre, and Comminges. She would also inherit Henry's claims to the kingdom of Upper Navarre, usurped by the crown of Spain, with the title of queen. Henry's extreme desire to recover the territory so unjustly appropriated, was known to king Francis; as well as the indignation which his brother-in-law felt, that his interests had been so disregarded during the conferences of Cambray, and in preceding negotiations. The policy of the Emperor Charles aimed always at decreasing the power of his popular rival, by fomenting civil dissensions throughout France; and by kindling discord in the cabinet. The rumour, therefore, had gradually gained ground—partly owing to the silence of the imperial ambassador, resident in Paris, and partly by the well-known coldness subsisting between the king of Navarre, and king Francis—that secret overtures had been made to Henry, by the emperor, for the betrothal of the princess Jeanne

to his eldest son, Philip, prince of the Asturias; when, in favour of this alliance, Charles had professed himself willing to make present and advantageous concessions to the house of Albret. The only condition insisted on by the emperor, was reported to be, that Jeanne should receive her education at Toledo, with her future consort. Marguerite in vain endeavoured to assure the king that this rumour was without foundation; and that her husband was incapable of so disloyal an action as that of confiding his daughter, and presumptive heiress, to the guardianship of the emperor. But Francis, believing that Marguerite was likewise deceived, steadily adhered to his resolution of not permitting his niece to approach the Spanish frontier. It is probable, however, that the suspicion of Francis was then needlessly excited, and that no direct overtures had been made to king Henry, relative to the marriage of his daughter with the prince of the Asturias. The succession of the princess to her father's dominions, was, at this period, doubtful; and in the event of the birth of a male heir to the heritage of Albret, Jeanne's alliance would have been considered scarcely brilliant enough for the future sovereign of Spain, and its dependencies.

Having procured the consent of Marguerite, to the permanent establishment of the princess Jeanne in France, the king coldly signified to Henry his irrevocable decision on the subject; but, to give a certain sanction to this arbitrary exercise of his royal prerogative, Francis informed the king of Navarre that it was his intention to bestow the princess in marriage on his second son,

Henry, duke of Orleans. This project received Marguerite's cordial assent; the alliance was, also, one highly acceptable to the king of Navarre, despite the unceremonious manner in which king Francis took upon himself to dispose of his niece. The young duke had entered his thirteenth year, and seemed, in every respect, a suitable consort for Jeanne; while the probable reversion of the territories of the house of Albret, with a revenue of six hundred thousand crowns, formed a magnificent appanage in prospect for the second prince of the blood royal. "Monsieur d'Orleans, although his temper is somewhat reserved and melancholy, already gives evidence of great good sense and judgment," writes the Venetian ambassador, Marino Giustiniano; "he is destined for the daughter of the queen of Navarre, who, jointly with her husband, possesses a revenue of 600,000 crowns."[1] It is uncertain whether any formal ceremony of betrothment passed between the youthful pair before the departure of the king and queen of Navarre, for Béarn: no official record is extant; but, as the alliance was never accomplished, it is possible that such a document may have been destroyed by command of the king, on the marriage, in 1533, of the duke of Orleans with Catherine de Medici. Had the good and noble-minded Jeanne d'Albret ascended the throne of France, when that brilliant heritage fell to the duke of Orleans, by the premature decease of his elder brother, instead of the Italian princess,

[1] Relations des ambassadeurs Vénétiens sur les affaires de France au 16ème siècle, recueillies par Tommasio. Rélation de Marino Giustiniano, ambassadeur en 1535, t. I. p. 105.

whose alliance was hastily sought to further the king's short-sighted policy respecting the Milanese, France might have been spared the anarchy and the bloodshed with which the latter half of the 16th century, that dark episode in her history, abounds.

As queen Marguerite expressed a decided objection to leave her daughter at the court of France, it was decided by the king, that the royal castle of Plessis-les-Tours should, in future, be assigned as a permanent residence for the princess Jeanne. The greater part of the household expenses of the princess, Francis took upon himself to defray; an arrangement of strict equity, as the king had insisted that she should hold separate state, apart from her royal parents. Madame de Silly, baillive de Caen, was nominated chief lady of honour, and governess, to the princess. The poet, Nicholas de Bourbon,[1] received the appointment of preceptor to Jeanne. It was his duty to teach the princess languages, belles-lettres, and poetry; an art in which she never attained the proficiency of her mother, queen Marguerite. King Francis appointed two chaplains to instruct his niece in her religious duties, and in theology; they formed part of her household, and were placed under the control of Pierre du Châtel, bishop of Tulle and Maçon. This illustrious prelate seems to have been associated with the baillive of Caen, in directing the education of the princess

[1] The poet Nicholas de Bourbon was born in 1503, at Vendœuvres, a village near to Langres. He was the son of a master blacksmith. The talent displayed by the young poet soon gained him powerful patrons. Francis I. gave him a post about the palace, and he had only attained the age of 29, when the queen of Navarre appointed him preceptor to her daughter.

Jeanne. M. d'Izernay was appointed steward of the household of the princess at Plessis. She had, moreover, a certain number of companions of her own age, a master of the horse, tirewomen, and many other subordinate attendants. Jeanne took up her abode at Plessis, about the beginning of the year, 1532, soon after the departure of her mother into Béarn.

Until the year 1537, all went on prosperously with Jeanne in her lonely state at Plessis. She made rapid improvement in learning; and the fearless truthfulness of her character distinctly developed itself. The fault which her preceptress had to contend against was, the tenacity of her temper. Once firmly resolved on any subject, the youthful Jeanne, undeterred by the fear of punishment, and not to be subdued by remonstrances, or persuasion, always carried her point. Sometimes she found it expedient to temporize; but she unvaryingly resumed her project at the first propitious opportunity. The freedom of her remarks to her royal uncle, who visited Plessis as frequently as state affairs permitted, excited the amazement; and often kindled the alarm of the good baillive de Caen. It was to her mother alone that Jeanne testified the submission becoming to her age and position; for the pertinent remarks of the young princess, when reprimanded, often occasioned serious discomposure to her instructors, and made them shrink from encountering her witty and sharp retorts.

During the month of December, of the year 1537, Jeanne was seized with a severe attack of fever and dysentery. She was afflicted with exhausting sickness for two whole days; and, at one time, the physicians

despaired of her recovery. A courier was despatched by the baillive of Caen, to St. Germain, to summon queen Marguerite, who, overwhelmed with affliction, instantly set out for Plessis. On Marguerite's arrival, Jeanne was convalescent; but the joy of beholding her mother so transported the princess, as to cause a slight relapse of her malady. Marguerite remained with her daughter a fortnight; at the expiration of that time, the princess was apparently restored to her usual health, though she suffered severely from the debilitating effects of this malady for many years afterwards.

At the commencement of the following year, Jeanne's paternal aunt and godmother, the princess Isabel d'Albret, viscountess de Rohan, came to reside at Plessis, bringing two children with her. The pecuniary affairs of the viscount de Rohan, were much involved; and had it not been for the generous offer of queen Marguerite, to afford a home at Plessis, to Madame de Rohan and her children, the viscount's reverse of fortune would have entailed total ruin on his family. The two eldest sons of the viscount, were placed by Marguerite amongst the pages of the dauphin; his eldest daughter, Françoise, the queen adopted as her own child. She caused her to be educated at Pau, under her own immediate control; an advantage which the jealous umbrage of Francis had denied to the princess Jeanne. When Marguerite visited the French court, *la petite Françoise*—as Mademoiselle de Rohan was called by her royal relatives—was sent to Plessis, to pass the interval in her cousin's society. Possibly Françoise, when there, often sighed to be restored to the gentle guidance of her aunt;

and to resume her place again amongst the noble damsels, whom Marguerite, when resident at Pau or Nérac, condescended to instruct with her own lips. Françoise seems occasionally to have received very unceremonious treatment from the hands of the youthful Jeanne, who already began to testify most supreme indifference, and even contempt, for those amongst her companions, whose disposition she considered to be weak and vacillating. Sturdy rectitude of principle, added to a disregard of consequences where truth was to be supported or enforced, formed distinguishing traits of the character of Marguerite's daughter, even during her childhood. The temperament of Françoise de Rohan was the very opposite of that of her cousin. Gentle, timid, and dependent, she shrank from contest of any description; and was always ready to yield a point, rather than combat it. Sometimes Jeanne's vivacity of disposition surpassed her courtesy to her gentle cousin; and in their childish pastimes, Françoise used often to receive severe chastisement from the hand of the princess, for her want of self-command and energy. When the queen of Navarre returned into Béarn, she generally visited Plessis to take leave of the princess. On one of these occasions, before Marguerite's departure, a poetical epistle of farewell was composed to present to the princess, each lady of the queen's suite writing a verse. Mademoiselle de Rohan, who was to return with the queen, also contributed her share; she there allùdes to her cousin's propensity for administering wholesome castigation. But for the youth of "la petite Françoise," her lines might be considered as written

with satirical point. She says in her address to the princess:—

Plus j'ay de toy souvent esté battue,
Plus mon amour s'esforce et s'evertue
De regreter ceste main, qui me bat:
Car ce mal là m'estoit plaisant esbat.
Or adieu donc la main, dont la rigueur,
Je préferois à tout bien et honneur![1]

The writers of the remaining verses are, Madame de Clermont, Madame de Benestaye, Madame Dartigaloube, Madame de Brueil, Madame de Saint Pather, and the Sénéchale de Grammont,[2] and her daughter. This latter lady was the favourite companion and friend of the princess Jeanne, who deeply regretted her departure into Gascony. Catherine d'Aster was several years older than Jeanne; and, like all the members of her illustrious family, she was distinguished for superior abilities. In her valedictory verse, Catherine speaks of the probability of her own early marriage, and of that of the princess; which, considering that Jeanne had only attained her eleventh year, and Mademoiselle de Grammont her fourteenth, shows that the princess already believed herself to have reached woman's estate, and conversed accordingly with her friend. Mademoiselle de Grammont's farewell, is pretty and energetic. She writes thus:

[1] Les adieux des dames de chez la royne de Navarre allant en Gascogne à Madame la Princesse de Navarre.—Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses.

[2] Claire de Grammont, heiress of the noble house of de Grammont, and niece of the celebrated Gabriel de Grammont, cardinal bishop of Tarbes. Claire, espoused Menhauld d'Aster, viscount d'Aure, who assumed the name and arms of Grammont.

Je te requiers que me veuilles permettre,
Que mon adieu icy je puisse mettre.
A Dieu je dis celle, dont la presence
J'ay desiré depuis la mienne enfance;
Et maintenant que j'ay reçu ce bien!
Te perds de veüe et ne scay pour combien.
Car un mary ou toy, ou moy prendra,
Dont eslongner ta veüe me faudra:
Mais j'ay espoir que ceux que nous prendront,
En liberté plus grande nous rendront
De nous revoir; et quoy qu'il advienne,
Je te requiers que de moy te souvienne.
Car quelque part que tu ailles, ira,
Et vive ou morte à jamais t'aymera
Ta Catherine, estant d'Aste nommée,
Qui de regret est quasi assomée![1]

As soon as queen Marguerite and her train departed, a fit of profound melancholy overpowered the princess Jeanne. The loss of her two young companions, Mesdemoiselles de Rohan and de Grammont, seems to have greatly affected her; for Jeanne, despite her occasional *brusquerie* of deportment, had a very affectionate disposition, and became sincerely attached to those whom she thought worthy of her regard. Her separation from her mother likewise, was deeply felt by Jeanne; nor could she be appeased, even though it was represented to her that her royal uncle, Francis I., for reasons which she would hereafter appreciate, had decreed this painful parting. Jeanne was now past the age of childhood; her education with its severe study, and philosophical bias, had prematurely developed her character. She had the most intense veneration for justice and consistency; and then, as throughout her life, no arbitrary

[1] Marguerites de la Marguerite.

dictum, the lawfulness, and expediency of which was not at once apparent to her, had power to compel her submission. In vain, the poet Nicholas de Bourbon invited the princess to return to her studies; and the baillive de Caen, seriously reproved her for her repinings, and the unseemly levity of her deportment towards her royal uncle, whose letters she scarcely condescended to answer. Jeanne passionately desired them to obtain for her permission to rejoin her royal parents, which was her paramount desire; or else to prevail upon the king to suffer her to reside at the court of France. For hours together, the princess used to weep in her lonely chamber at Plessis, listening to the wailing of the wind as it swept through the dense forests which, at this period, encircled the fortress-palace of Louis XI. The gloomy courts of Plessis, bristling still with the terrible defences, and iron cages, in which that stern despot immured the helpless victims of his tyranny, filled the sensitive mind of the princess with dismay. Nor could the internal splendour of the palace, assigned for her home by her uncle, reconcile her to its gloom. Jeanne eagerly listened to every fearful legend connected with the past history of the castle. The magnificent hall of Plessis, in which the ceremonies of betrothment of Francis I., when duke de Valois, with the princess Claude of France had been performed, brought reminiscences only to the excited mind of Jeanne of the terrible interviews which King Louis had there granted to the famed provost of his archers, Tristan l'Hermitte, whose victims had often knelt in mute agony on the marble pavement, at the feet of the inexorable

monarch. When she walked abroad, yawning chasms still marked the spots where Louis had caused pitfalls to be constructed to defend the approaches of his fortress-palace against unauthorized intruders. Even the rushing waters of the Loire, to the morbid imagination of the princess, echoed back the moans of the unhappy wretches who had perished in its depths; or had met with death at the hands of the merciless provost and his archers, by hanging from the boughs which shadowed the river's bank. In truth, a more gloomy residence, for his young niece, than Plessis-les-Tours king Francis could not have chosen throughout his wide dominions. Daily, therefore, the depression of the princess grew darker; and she sighed to find herself in a scene more congenial with the lively tone of her mind, and surrounded by companions of her own age, who could share her pursuits. "Jeanne, the heiress of our Henry and Marguerite," says Olhagaray, the historian of Béarn,[1] "was brought up in France, at Plessis-les-Tours, which place her uncle Francis I. seldom permitted her to leave, because he feared that his brother-in-law intended to bestow this princess on Philip, son of the emperor. This abode proved very wearisome to our princess, so that her chamber often echoed with her lamentations, and the air with her sighs, while she gave a loose rein to her tears. The lustre of her complexion (for she was one of the fairest princesses of Europe) was marred by the abundance of her tears; her hair floated negligently on her shoulders, and her lips remained without smiles."

It was the fear lest the King of Navarre should bestow

[1] Olhagaray, Histoire de Foix, Béarn et Navarre, p. 503.

his daughter's hand on prince Philip, which induced Francis to insist on Jeanne's residence at Plessis; and, with habitual deference to the commands of her brother, queen Marguerite acquiesced in a separation from her daughter, knowing well how vain it was to combat the will of the king. Already, the name of Philip of Spain was a sound of evil omen to Jeanne, and shadowed her youthful days, even as her future was embittered by his baneful influence.

The alliance of his daughter with the heir of Spain presented great and dazzling advantages, of which the king of Navarre was sensible; it flattered his pride and his resentment, that Jeanne—whose hand had been so unceremoniously rejected by Francis, for his son the duke of Orleans, when it had appeared expedient to the king to propitiate the Médici—should ascend the proudest throne in Europe, and place upon her brow the diadem relinquished by Isabel, the lamented consort of the emperor Charles V. Had the king of Navarre persisted in his design, there is little doubt that, with the active connivance of the emperor, this union would have been accomplished. Charles, at this period of his life, desired it intensely; for the disgrace of his unsuccessful invasion of France in 1536, would have been triumphantly effaced, by the acquisition to the crown of Spain, of the rich frontier provinces of Jeanne's southern heritage.

The increasing discontent evinced by the princess at the secluded education which it was the will of her royal uncle to bestow upon her, occasioned serious embarrassment to Francis I. He perceived that it was no longer

possible to pursue the same system; but before he confided the princess Jeanne to the guardianship of her parents, the king resolved, by solemnly affiancing her to a spouse of his own selection, to frustrate any secret understanding which might exist between her father and the emperor, relative to the disposal of her hand. It happened, that about this period, the year 1540, while king Francis was sojourning at his castle of Amboise, during the month of May, he received a visit from the duke of Cleves and Juliers, who had journeyed to France to implore the assistance of the king in his contest with the emperor, relative to the duchy of Guelders. This succession formed one of the most complicated of the questions then agitating Germany. The claimants of the duchy were three: first, the duke of Cleves and Juliers, who was the grandson of Ulric, last duke of Guelders; secondly, the duke of Lorraine, nephew of duke Ulric; and thirdly, Charles V, who put in a twofold demand for this important succession, claiming the province of Guelderland, as an escheat to the imperial crown, owing to the decease of duke Ulric without leaving heirs male; also, as a territory appertaining to the house of Hapsburg, in virtue of the will of Arnoul, duke of Guelders, who, disinheriting his son Adolphus, bequeathed the dominions of his house to the emperor's great-grandfather Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy. On the decease of Ulric, duke of Guelders, the states of the duchy adjudged his territories to his son-in-law, William II, duke of Cleves and Juliers; but the latter, dying before he could claim a ratification of his investiture from the emperor, the cardinal de

Granvelle replied to the application, when made by William's son and successor, "that the emperor declined to recognise the pretensions, either of the duke of Cleves, or of the duke of Lorraine, as both these princes traced descent from female members of the house of Guelders, who could transmit no right to their posterity; but that it was the intention of his imperial majesty to incorporate the duchy to his provinces of the Low Countries, as a fief escheated to his crown." On learning the determination of the emperor, the duke of Cleves renounced his allegiance to the imperial crown; and hastily levying troops, he placed strong garrisons in the principal towns of the duchy of Cleves, and despatching a body of forces under the command of Martin Von Rossem to the borders of Guelderland, he himself proceeded to Paris to implore succour from Francis I, and to demand the coveted investiture at the king's hands.[1] The welcome which the duke of Cleves received from Francis, exceeded his most sanguine expectations. The king promised him succours in men and money: and, moreover, offered to bestow upon him the hand of his niece, Jeanne d'Albret, the heiress of Béarn. The king, by this measure, at once exonerated himself from further anxiety respecting Jeanne's future union with the son of the emperor; and by a subtle stroke of policy, he, in his turn, kindled in Charles's bosom, the direst alarm, as the duke of Cleves professed Lutheran tenets,

[1] Mezeray, Abbrégé Chronologique, t. II, p. 504. Varillas, Hist. de l'Hérésie, t. III., p. 162. Sandoval, Hist. de la vida del emperador Carlos V.

and was considered to be one of the chief upholders of the reformed doctrines in Germany. This alliance, therefore, would necessarily have the effect of strengthening the king's relation with the German Lutherans—subjects always in revolt under Charles's imperial sceptre.

The duke of Cleves had completed his twenty-fourth year: he was tall and handsome in person, and endowed with the accomplishments, which in that martial age constituted a finished cavalier. He was an expert horseman, magnificent in his attire and equipage, profuse to his dependants, while he possessed learning enough to discuss literature with the erudite professors who thronged the court of France; and to appreciate the gorgeous specimens of art with which the king loved to surround himself. The revenues of the duchy of Cleves were ample for the maintenance of its sovereign's state: the position of the duke in Germany was one of power and dignity. His eldest sister, Sybilla of Cleves, was the consort of the elector of Saxony, Frederick; his youngest sister, Anne, had recently become the fourth consort of Henry VIII, king of England. His descent, on the maternal side, from the house of Guelders—a race notorious for its criminal annals—was the only apparent blemish to be discerned in the son-in-law presented by king Francis for the acceptance of his sister, and her royal consort.

The king, meantime, informed the king and queen of Navarre of his intentions relative to the disposal of their daughter's hand; and to reconcile the royal pair to

this arbitrary decision, Francis announced, that the duke of Cleves had readily assented to the only condition he had thought proper to impose, which was, that Jeanne after her betrothal should be permitted to remain in France for the period of three years under her mother's guardianship. The intelligence was received with great indignation by the king of Navarre; who, amongst the other causes of complaint he treasured against his brother-in-law, added now the violation by Francis of his promise to wed the princess Jeanne with his second son, Henry, duke of Orleans. The marriage of the heiress of Béarn with the duke of Cleves, a prince in arms against his suzerain the emperor, appeared to Henry a design fatal to the safety of the remaining dominions of the house of Albret, which lay on the Spanish frontier, and exposed to the first impulse of indignation felt by Charles, on hearing of the intended alliance. The king of Navarre, moreover, knew that his last chance of inducing the Spanish monarch to restore the kingdom of Upper Navarre expired from the day that the hand of Jeanne was bestowed on the duke of Cleves. The states of the principality of Béarn, also protested against this marriage; their objections being grounded on the inexpediency of allying their future sovereign with a prince, whose territory was so remotely situated as regarded Béarn; and they justly observed, that if the marriage were accomplished, the principality, during the absence of its sovereign, would, at no distant period, pass under the sway of the French or Spanish crown.[1] Queen Marguerite, however, evinced

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. I., p. 11.

no disapproval of the alliance proposed for her daughter; and she exerted herself to moderate her husband's opposition. Henry dreaded too much the threats of Francis to offer prolonged resistance; for the king had declared that a military occupation of Béarn would follow the discovery of any attempted negotiation with the emperor; while the annexation of that principality to the crown of France should be the penalty inflicted if the king of Navarre conveyed his daughter across the Spanish frontier. The religion professed by the duke of Cleves recommended him to Marguerite's favour; his opulence, and his pretensions to the imperial purple, after the members of the house of Hapsburg, flattered her ambition; but, above all, it was the will of the king that this alliance should be effected.

The princess Jeanne was at length apprized of the event destined to effect so complete a subversion of the domestic routine at Plessis. One day Francis, while sojourning at Amboise, commanded a royal hunt along the banks of the Loire; and attended by a few of his most favoured courtiers, he separated from his train, and suddenly appeared before the gates of Plessis-les Tours. Jeanne, summoned to the presence of her royal uncle, welcomed him with transports of delight, and in return received from his lips the intelligence that her hand having been promised to the duke of Cleves, she was to fulfil immediately the engagement contracted for her; and was, consequently, to depart with the shortest possible delay to join her mother queen Marguerite, at Alençon. The proud blood of her race mantled the

brow of the princess at this peremptory command; and overpowered by her surprise and indignation, she burst into a passionate flood of tears. Soon, however, recovering her self-possession, she resolutely approached her uncle, and "very humbly besought him that she might not be compelled to marry M. de Cleves."[1] Francis, who could never brook opposition to his will, turned coldly from the weeping child, and reiterating his directions for her immediate departure from Plessis, he took his leave.

There remained no alternative for the princess but to obey her uncle's mandate, and prepare for her formal presentation to her intended consort. Jeanne desired a more cheerful abode, and companionship with maidens of her own age; she was passionately attached to France, and the thought of quitting her country wrung tears from her eyes. In Paris, where she made a brief sojourn on her road to Alençon, king Francis presented to his niece the bridegroom he had chosen for her. Jeanne did not attempt to disguise the repugnance which she felt for the duke; and child as she was, she demeaned herself so haughtily as to incur her uncle's serious displeasure. She evinced not the slightest complacency at receiving the homage of so brilliant a cavalier as duke William; and it was observed that the lip of the royal bride elect curled disdainfully as she marked the servility of deportment manifested by the duke towards the king, and the all-powerful constable de Montmorency. When remonstated with by

[1] Lettre de Marguerite, reine de Navarre au roi. *See* Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême, v. II., p. 370.

the baillive de Caen and others, on her unconciliating demeanour, which, it was observed, was likely to produce the worst possible effect on the mind of her future spouse, Jeanne carelessly replied, "that she deemed it no advantage to leave France, and her own heritage of Béarn to espouse a duke of Cleves." Francis manifested excessive displeasure at the contumacy displayed by the young princess, whose dawning intellect, and strength of character he was far from properly appreciating. The king expressed himself with great severity to the baillive de Caen, before her departure with the princess for Alençon, commanding the former to communicate his words to queen Marguerite, in order that her representations might induce the princess to show becoming submission to his will. The jealous umbrage of Francis took alarm at the unexpected opposition which he encountered; as he, perhaps rightly, attributed Jeanne's disobedience to the secret encouragement afforded to her by her father.

Queen Marguerite received the report of the baillive in great consternation. She sent for her daughter, and straitly questioned her on the reason of this rebellious defiance; and expostulated with her on the daring request which she had made to the king on his visit to her at Plessis. Jeanne calmly replied: "that she had then taken the liberty of speaking frankly to the king; having been in the habit of saying to him all she thought and wished." Aware of her brother's suspicion of the want of loyal fidelity manifested by the king of Navarre, and anxious to excuse her daughter's conduct, Marguerite wrote thus to the king:

"Monseigneur, in my extreme tribulation, I experience but one consolation, which is the certain knowledge, that neither the king of Navarre nor myself feel other desire than to obey you, not only in the matter of this marriage, but in all that you command us. Having heard, Monseigneur, that my daughter—not appreciating as she ought the great honour which you conferred by deigning to visit her, nor the obedience which she owes to you; neither, that a maiden ought to have no will of her own—was bold enough to utter so senseless a request, as to beseech you that she might not be married to M. de Cleves. I know not what to think, Monseigneur, nor how to address you, for I am overpowered with grief, and have none in the world to whom I can apply for comfort, or for counsel. The king of Navarre is also so astonished and grieved, that I have never before seen him so indignant; for we cannot divine whence this great boldness on her part arose, she never having even mentioned such a design to us. She excuses herself on the plea, that she is on more intimate terms with you than even with ourselves; but this intimacy ought not to inspire so great a freedom on her part, being, as I believe, not advised to it by any one. If I could discover the personage who inspired her with such an idea, I would make so great a demonstration of my displeasure as should convince you, Monseigneur, that this foolish affair has been attempted without the sanction and desire of her parents, who have no will but yours. Knowing, therefore, Monseigneur, that it is your habit more to pardon errors, than to punish them—especially, when the understanding fails, as it has

evidently done in this case of my poor daughter—I entreat you very humbly, Monseigneur, that for this one unreasonable petition she has preferred, and which is the first fault she has committed in respect to yourself, you will not withdraw that paternal favour which you have ever manifested towards her, and ourselves."[1]

Jeanne, meanwhile, continued to offer the most pertinacious opposition to the alliance proposed for her; her mother's eloquent entreaties and representations failed to mollify the heart of the princess towards her German suitor; and she vehemently declared "that she should die if the project were persisted in." The duke's religion proved no recommendation to his suit; for the princess had been brought up in strict communion with the Church of Rome; nor was it until a subsequent period, after Jeanne had been domesticated for several years with her royal mother, that she insensibly imbibed that leaning towards the tenets of Calvin which imparted a distinctive colouring to her after life. There is reason to believe, however, that Marguerite caused her daughter to be carefully instructed in the principles of reform; for the princess herself asserts, that one of the reasons why she did not make an earlier profession of its doctrines was, her resentment at the little gratitude demonstrated by the majority of the Calvinistic ministers for the benefits which they received from the sovereigns of Navarre; but, principally, for their misappropriation of a considerable sum

[1] Lettre de la reine de Navarre au roi. *See* Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême v. II., p. 370.

of money, despatched by her royal mother into Switzerland and Germany as alms, for the proscribed and suffering Lutherans.

The bishop of Seéz, meanwhile, returned from the mission which queen Marguerite had confided to him —that of conveying her letter to the king—bringing very positive commands from Francis that the princess should be affianced without delay to the duke of Cleves. When this ceremony was accomplished, Francis requested his sister to conduct the princess to Châtellerault, that her marriage might there be solemnized in the presence of the court. So overwhelmed was Jeanne by this command, and so indignant was her protest, that queen Marguerite was compelled to have recourse to the somewhat ludicrous expedient of threatening the princess with a severe whipping, unless she evinced a more lowly and becoming deportment. Jeanne's intrepid spirit was not, however, to be so daunted; indeed, to such a length did she carry her determined opposition to the absolute commands of her mother and her royal uncle, that, when it is considered the princess had only just completed her twelfth year, the conviction maintains itself that Francis had reason to distrust the sincerity of the king of Navarre's acquiescence in his will; and that Jeanne was secretly abetted in her rebellion by her father; if not actually, yet by his undoubted connivance. Finding that her resistance promised to avail little, Jeanne adopted the extraordinary expedient of making a secret protest against her compulsory nuptials—a document which she caused three of the officers of her household to witness. This

curious protest was composed by the princess herself; it is written throughout by her own hand, and its tenour is as follows:[1]—

"I, Jehanne de Navarre, persisting in the protestations I have already made, do hereby again affirm and protest, by these present, that the marriage which it is desired to contract between the duke of Cleves and myself, is against my will; that I have never consented to it, nor will consent; and that all I may say and do hereafter, by which it may be attempted to prove that I have given my consent, will be forcibly extorted against my wish and desire from my dread of the king, of the king my father, and of the queen my mother, who has threatened to have me whipped by the baillive of Caen, my governess. By command of the queen, my mother, my said governess has also several times declared, that if I do not all in regard to this marriage, which the king wishes, and if I did not give my consent, I should be punished so severely, as to occasion my death; and that by refusing, I might be the cause of the total ruin and destruction of my father, my mother, and of their house; the which has inspired me with such fear and dread, even to be the cause of the ruin of my said father and mother, that I know not to whom to have recourse, excepting to God, seeing that my father and my mother abandon me, who both well know what I

[1] Papiers d'Etat du cardinal Granvelle publiés d'après les MSS. de Besançon, par Charles Weiss, t. III., docum. 30. This protest, and the following one have been published by the author in the Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême; nevertheless, these curious documents are too important to be omitted in the history of Jeanne d'Albret.

have said to them—that never can I love the duke of Cleves, and that I will not have him. Therefore, I protest beforehand, if it happens that I am affianced, or married to the said duke of Cleves in any way or manner, it will be against my heart, and in defiance of my will; and that he shall never become my husband, nor will I ever hold and regard him as such, and that any marriage shall be reputed null and void; in testimony of which, I appeal to God, and yourselves, as witnesses of this my declaration that you are about to sign with me, admonishing each of you to remember the compulsion, violence, and constraint employed against me, upon the matter of this said marriage.

(Signed) "JEANNE DE NAVARRE,"
"J. D'ARROS,"
"FRANCES NAVARRO,"
"ARNAULD DUQUESSE."

Notwithstanding the fervour of her denials, the ceremony of betrothment was performed between the princess Jeanne, and the duke of Cleves, in the great hall of the castle of Alençon; the prelate officiating being the bishop of Seéz. In the midst of her annoyance and distress, the princess exhibited great presence of mind; and afterwards she composedly prepared to accompany her mother to Châtellerault, at which place the more trying ordeal of her public nuptials was to take place. Before her departure from Alençon, prompted probably by the parties who had before inspired her with resolution to place on record a written protest against this marriage, the princess drew up a second memorial, which she

presented for the signature of the same persons who had witnessed the first. The princess expressed herself in the following terms:—

"I, Jehanne de Navarre, in the presence of you, who out of love for the truth, signed the protestation which I before presented, and who perceive that I am compelled and obliged by the queen my mother, and by my governess, to submit to the marriage demanded by the duke of Cleves between himself and me; and that it is intended, against my will, to proceed to the solemnities of a marriage between us; I take you all to witness that I persevere in the protest I made before you, on the day of the pretended betrothal between myself and the said duke of Cleves, and in all and every protestation that I may at any time have made by word of mouth, or under my hand; moreover, I declare that the said solemnity of marriage, and every other thing ordained relative to it, is done against my will, and that all shall hereafter be regarded as null and void, as having been done, and consented to by me, under violence and restraint; in testimony of which I call you all to witness, requesting you to sign the present, with myself, in the hope that by God's help it will one day avail me.

(Signed) "JEHANNE DE NAVARRE,"[1]
"&c., &c., &c."

Jeanne received a very cordial reception from king Francis, on her arrival at Châtellerault, where the most sumptuous preparations were in progress for the

[1] Papiers d'Etat du cardinal Granvelle, t. III., docum. 30.

ceremony of her marriage. The king disregarded every remonstrance made to him by his niece; affecting to regard her objections as childish, and unreasonable. The duke of Cleves, wearied of his vain attempt to propitiate his youthful bride, devoted himself to queen Marguerite, whose beauty and numerous fascinations made him almost oblivious of the disdain manifested by her daughter.

The marriage ceremony between the duke and the princess Jeanne of Navarre was performed on the 15th of July, 1540.[1] The youthful bride was attired in a robe of cloth of gold, beset with jewels. A ducal coronet, composed of very rich gems, circled her brow; and the train of her mantle was bordered with ermine. The ceremonial was ordered with pompous splendour: all the great officers of state had been summoned to Châtellerault; and so great was the profusion and display, that the coronation ceremonies of the emperor Charles V., cost considerably less than the pageant in which Jeanne performed so reluctant a part.[2] When king Francis presented himself to lead the bride to the altar, Jeanne, who was determined to oppose the measure to the very last, rose from her chair; then, suddenly complaining of indisposition, she professed her inability to walk under the weight of the jewels and gold with which her robe was adorned. Francis, inexpressibly annoyed, glanced towards the brilliant throng which surrounded him; and summoning the constable de

[1] Mezeray, Abbrégé. chron. t. II., p. 504. Paradin, Hist. de Notre Temps.

[2] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. I., p. 13.

Montmorency, he commanded him to take the princess in his arms, and carry her to the chapel. Montmorency obeyed; though deeply wounded at being selected by his royal master for such an office: for the king's command was considered by many persons, including the constable himself, to inflict so manifest a degradation on the eminent dignity of his office, as to betoken approaching disgrace. It must, however, have been Montmorency's inordinate vanity, wounded by the command given by Francis, which prompted the exclamation, as he returned to his position in the procession after placing the princess at the altar: "*C'est fait désormais de ma faveur. Adieu luy dis?*"[1] for the office he had just so reluctantly fulfilled, had been performed on other occasions by princes of the blood royal; and, therefore, it could bring no degradation, even to a Montmorency. Rumours, however, had long been rife of the king's intention to exile his quondam favourite the constable, whose arrogance, and churlish temper excited the displeasure of his sovereign: the courtiers, therefore, were on the alert to detect, and perhaps to impute more than due significance to any incident in which Montmorency was concerned.

A magnificent banquet and ball followed the solemnization of Jeanne's nuptials, at which she was compelled to appear by the express will of the king. She was then permitted to retire to her mother's apartments, where the princess was again formally consigned by the duke of Cleves to the guardianship of queen Marguerite, and the control of the baillive de Caen,

[1] Brantôme, Dames Illustres—Vie de Marguerite de Valois.

"until such time as she should have attained suitable years to fulfil the conjugal engagements she had contracted."[1]

For eight subsequent days the most brilliant pageants celebrated the event. Jeanne still avoided her bridegroom, whose persistence in a suit so displeasing to herself, she resented with more than juvenile indignation. "In the meadow of Châtellerault," relates one of the chroniclers of these festivities, "jousts, and tourneys were holden; for which halls, galleries, triumphal arches, and palaces were constructed of verdant boughs; within which armed knights were placed to defend them in honour of the ladies of their hearts, whose devices were interlaced in the foliage with the arms of the cavaliers, and with other spoil captured from the assailants. Close to these said edifices were verdant booths, tenanted by hermits, clad in green or gray velvet, and other gay colours; whose office it was to serve as guides to any strange knights, who might happen to arrive. In another part of the meadow were ladies, who personated nymphs and dryades, attended by their dwarfs; all ordered according to the mode and fashion of bygone days. This joust, for novelty and magnificence, was the most memorable thing of the kind which had been done, or heard of in our days. These knightly encounters came off in the day time;

[1] Du Haillan, Hist. Gen. de France, p. 1466. Brantôme, Dames Illustres—Vie de Marguerite de Valois. Dictionaire Historique de Bayle—Art. Jeanne de Navarre. The nuptials of the princess Jeanne were sometimes designated under the soubriquet of "*les noces salées*," as the profusion displayed by the court on this occasion was liquidated by a rise of the *gabelle*, or salt duties payable to the crown.

but that there might not lack amusement at night, lists were constructed in which the joustings continued by torchlight; a thing never before heard of in France."[1] The duke of Cleves, at the conclusion of the festivities, took his leave, and departed, to prosecute his war against the emperor, encouraged by the positive promise of king Francis to march a body of troops into Germany, under his own immediate command, or of that of the dauphin. The princess Jeanne, now scrupulously addressed at court as duchess of Cleves, gladly bade farewell to her uncle, who overwhelmed her with costly gifts, and accompanied her royal parents to their castle of Nérac, from whence they proceeded to winter at Pau.

For the two following years, Jeanne remained in Béarn, happy in the society of her mother, and sharing the lessons, and the recreations of the noble damsels in Marguerite's train. This period was productive of great moral benefit to the character of the princess. The vehemence of her temper became softened under the judicious guidance of her mother; and her education made great progress, though rather from association with the learned men of the court of Pau, than from the study of books; for Jeanne's temperament was too lively to permit her to display great power of application. From constant companionship with the reformed teachers, refugees in Béarn, Jeanne began gradually to imbibe a liking for their doctrine; their lives, and the stern self-denial practised by their followers recommended itself to a

[1] Paradin, Hist. de Notre Temps.

mind which repudiated the slightest compromise with principle, for the sake of ease, or expediency.

It was a problem at which every one wondered, though few sought to solve it, the marvellous indifference so early displayed by the niece of the magnificent Francis I, and the child of the refined Marguerite d'Angoulême for qualities, or objects, however attractive in themselves, but which upon closer survey, might be pronounced deficient in genuine worth. The severe simplicity of mind, and the habit which early distinguished Jeanne of probing the motives of others, and of penetrating to the origin of what was averred to be fact, rendered the princess more than ordinarily liable to be impressed by the doctrines of reform. Her inquiring mind was never checked in its search of proof, when studying theology under Farel, or Roussel; nor was she arrested in her deductions by that solemn barrier so often opposed by the bishop of Maçon—the authority of the church. Jeanne daily studied the Scriptures under the guidance of her mother, and of Gérard Roussel, bishop of Oléron, almoner to the queen, a prelate of singular piety, and who asserted under the Roman purple a liberality of sentiment, and a boldness in discussing theological tenets, worthy of Calvin himself. The only distasteful circumstance connected with the opinions so fearlessly broached, was the fact, that her betrothed spouse, the duke of Cleves, professed Lutheran tenets; and any trifling incident which seemed to strengthen the bond which united the duke's career with her own, became repugnant to the princess. Nevertheless, the lessons which the princess Jeanne imbibed

during her residence in Béarn, and the truths that she heard from the eloquent lips of queen Marguerite, left their indelible impression on her mind, and afterwards brought forth a plentiful result.

The political fortunes of the duke of Cleves, meantime, declined. Scarce had eighteen months elapsed after the celebration of his nuptials with the princess Jeanne, than the formidable displeasure of the emperor threatened destruction to the traitor vassal, who had offered allegiance to the lily of the Valois. The career of Martin Von Rossem, the general in command of the troops of the duke of Cleves, received a check; not, however, before the province of Brabant had been ravaged, and even the town of Antwerp menaced: but so exasperated was Charles at this bold defiance, that he vowed "*qu'il quitteroit plutôt sa couronne, que de laisser au duc un pouce de terre.*"[1] About the month of August, 1543, the emperor, at the head of an army of 40,000 infantry, and 8000 horse, levied for the invasion of France, and the reconquest of Luxembourg, entered the duchy of Cleves, and laid siege to the town of Dueren. King Francis, meanwhile, under whose protection alone the duke of Cleves had ventured to defy his suzerain, occupied the duchy of Luxembourg; and at the time the emperor appeared before Dueren, the king was employed in reconstructing the fortifications of the castle of Landrecy upon a most stupendous scale. Appalled at the certain destruction which menaced him, the duke of Cleves despatched courier after courier to implore the aid of a division of

[1] Mém. de Martin du Bellay.

the French army; but Francis, with that strange instability which characterized many of his measures, now appeared as indifferent in espousing the defence of the prince, upon whom he had bestowed the hand of his niece, as he had been imperative in forcing the inclination of the princess. Part of the French army was engaged before Landrecy; the other half under the command of the dauphin Henry, penetrated to the borders of the provinces of Brabant and Hainault, where many important fortresses had been captured. The duke's messengers, therefore, were dismissed with vague promises of future assistance on the part of the king, who already found it a difficult matter to provide efficient garrisons for the conquests his army had achieved.

The town of Dueren, meantime, fell before the arms of the irate emperor; the inhabitants were indiscriminately slaughtered, and the fortifications razed. Ruremonde, and other of the principal towns of the Duchy, hastened to make submission, apprehending the same massacre. The province of Guelderland already acknowledged the sway of the invincible Charles, who, at the head of his victorious army, laid siege to the town of Venloo, which he menaced with destruction, unless it capitulated within a given interval. The conquest of the duchy of Cleves was complete. The panic which overwhelmed duke William and his ministers, seems to have deprived them of all power to meet the impending crisis; still greater was their incapacity to provide for future emergency. There remained but two alternatives for the choice of the duke. The first was unqualified submission to the potent Charles, with the renunciation of alliance with

the king of France, and his acceptance of any terms which the emperor chose to impose, for his late defection: the second was, to abandon the duchy to the mercy of its conqueror, and, at the head of the troops under the command of Von Rossem, to join the French army in Luxembourg, and, beneath the banner of the fleur-de-lis, gloriously to win back his ancient heritage. If a spark of martial energy had glowed in the bosom of the duke of Cleves, such would have been his undoubted decision: The recreant blood of the house of Guelders, from which he maternally descended, however, silenced the promptings of honour; and the duke suffered himself to be convinced of the expediency of adopting measures of abject submission to propitiate his offended liege. It was represented to the duke, that his duchy, if once incorporated with the dominions of the Hapsburg, would probably never be restored; but that the emperor, if duly propitiated, and being on the eve of a momentous struggle with his ancient adversary the king of France, might extend his imperial clemency, rather than drive the duke to more intimate alliance with France. Almost beside himself at the uncertainty of his position, the courage of the duke abandoned him; the recollection of his bride, and her fair southern heritage, of her magnificent uncle, and the latter's still more splendid promises, faded from his mind, and he determined to make peace with the emperor, at the cost of any personal humiliation Charles might think fit to inflict.

During these transactions, the king had been engaged in making active preparations for the succour of the

duke of Cleves. Believing that no better indication could he afford the emperor, that it was his intention to espouse the protection of the rebel vassal of the empire, than by perfecting the marriage between duke William and his niece, he despatched his cardinal Du Bellay, into Béarn, with express orders to conduct Jeanne to the camp in Luxembourg, from whence the king intended to escort her himself to Aix.[1] The despair of the young Jeanne was overwhelming, when she was apprized of the nature of the cardinal's mission to Pau. With tears she protested that she should die if compelled to obey her uncle's summons.[2] Convinced of her father's sympathy, Jeanne implored him to save her from exile, and from a destiny which she shuddered to contemplate. Resolutely Jeanne closed her ears to the remonstrances of the cardinal Du Bellay, one of the most eloquent and insinuating prelates of France. Equally vain were the pleadings and exhortations of queen Marguerite, to impress upon her daughter the necessity of submission to the will of the king. Jeanne, however, was obliged to depart, after taking a most agonized farewell of her royal mother; and, accompanied by the king of Navarre, she set forth for her new home.

The duke of Cleves, in ignorance of the exertions making in his favour by king Francis, proceeded to the imperial camp at Venloo, attended by fifteen of his

[1] Gailliard, Hist. de François I., t. I. Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. I., p. 15.

[2] Lettre de Marguerite, reine de Navarre, à François I. See Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême, Vol. II., p. 425.

officers, and demanded audience of the emperor. This request was harshly refused; but it was intimated to the duke, that the chancellor de Granvelle would grant him hospitality until his imperial majesty had decided on his fate. To the tent of de Granvelle the duke accordingly repaired; and by dint of entreaty and remonstrances, he at length, induced that potent minister to intercede in his behalf with Charles. Before nightfall, the chancellor brought to his suppliant the cheering intelligence that the emperor, in his gracious clemency, on due representation being made of the duke's repentance and readiness to atone for his treason, had consented to admit him to his presence on the morrow.

Early on the following morning, the duke of Brunswick, the coadjutor of the archbishop of Cologne, and another nobleman, who acted as ambassador from the city of Cologne, presented themselves, and introduced the duke to the presence of his offended suzerain. The place of audience, selected by the emperor, was a large tent which was fitted as a chapel for the besieging army. Charles received the duke seated in a chair of state, with the crown on his head, and the sceptre in his hand. As his offending vassal approached with hesitating step, the brow of the emperor contracted. The betrothed husband of the princess of Navarre, and his three mediators then humbly knelt at the foot of the throne; the emperor took not the slightest heed of this action, but averted his head. The duke then exclaimed: "Most august emperor! I come to throw myself at your feet, to accept whatever chastisement it may please you to inflict for my past sins; or to receive from your

clemency a hope, however faint it may be, of pardon and grace." The duke of Brunswick then pronounced an oration in the German language, which lasted a quarter of an hour, still kneeling: his address was followed by another from the ambassador of Cologne, praying the emperor to exercise his gracious clemency towards the criminal, though repentant, subject at his feet. Charles listened with disdainful attention, having first commanded a secretary to take note of the intercessory harangues addressed to him: when they concluded, and the culprit awaited the fiat in breathless suspense, he replied in a short address, promising oblivion of the past, upon certain conditions; then with a smile he stretched forth his hand, and raised the duke from his humble attitude.[1] The same day, September 13, 1543, a treaty was presented to the duke of Cleves for his signature, which contained the stipulations upon which the emperor consented to reinstate him in his forfeited dominions. The first article stipulated, that the duke of Cleves should return to the public exercise of the Romish Faith, and restore that religion to its ancient pre-eminence over the duchy; and that he should engage to renounce his alliance with the king of France. The duke further ceded the disputed territory of Guelderland and Zutphen to the empire; and engaged never to sign a treaty with any foreign power whatsoever, which did not include the emperor and his brother Ferdinand, king of the Romans. The forces of the duchy of Cleves were to be incorporated in the imperial army; and as a guarantee for the performance of

[1] Sandoval, Historia del emperador Carlos V., libro 25, p. 454.

these conditions, duke William consented that the largest fortresses in the duchy—the castles of Heinsberg and Sittard should be garrisoned for ten years by the emperor's troops.[1]

When these conditions were signed, the duchy of Cleves was restored to its duke, now to all intents and a vassal of the house of Hapsburg. By the advice of the emperor, the duke next wrote to excuse his act to king Francis, alleging, with great truth, that to the king's delay in Luxembourg might be attributed Charles's successful invasion of the duchy of Cleves. Finally, the duke demanded that his consort, the princess Jeanne de Navarre, might be conducted without delay to Aix-la-Chapelle, according to the agreement in her marriage contract, as the three years during which she was to remain under the guardianship of her royal mother were nearly expired.

The princess Jeanne had reached the city of Soissons, on her route to the camp. She remained there one night to recruit her strength; for the most gloomy depression preyed upon her spirits, as she drew nearer to the French frontier. In the middle of the night, the princess and her suite were aroused by the arrival of a courier from the camp, bearing despatches from the king to the cardinal du Bellay. The messenger was immediately conducted to the prelate, whose presence in Soissons was most unexpected by him. The king's missive announced the abject surrender of the duke of Cleves to the emperor; and the consequent determination of Francis to procure a dissolution of the duke's mar-

[1] Sandoval—Historia del Emperador Carlos V. libro 25, p. 454.

riage with the princess of Navarre; as the king impetuously declared that no vassal of the emperor's should receive investiture of a fief appertaining to the French crown. The king, therefore, directed that his niece should return, and take up her residence with queen Eleanor, at Fontainebleau, until he had decided on the measures most politic to be pursued under the circumstances. The joy felt by the princess Jeanne for her unexpected release was boundless—a satisfaction participated in by her father, who hastened to conduct her from the French frontier.[1]

Queen Marguerite's indignation was greatly excited when she heard of the ignoble concessions made by the duke of Cleves to the emperor, and she at once concurred in her brother's project to annul her daughter's marriage. "Monseigneur," wrote the queen, to king Francis, "I would rather see my daughter in her grave, than know her to be in the power of a man, who has deceived you, and inflicted so foul a blot on his own honour."[2] Now that it suited the king to break the bond he had so pertinaciously formed, the young princess was suffered to state her objections to the alliance; her aversion, it was now granted, might have a reasonable foundation; and the protests which she had made against the violence her uncle sought to inflict, became important documents of state. Application was at once made by the French ministers to the Holy See, for a bull, annulling the marriage—the plea placed on

[1] Vauvillers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. I, p. 16. Mém. de Martin du Bellay.

[2] Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême, queen of Navarre, vol. II., p. 425.

record being, the violence which had been done to the inclination of the princess throughout the affair. The duke of Cleves, who certainly could not be expected to exhibit symptoms of excessive disappointment at the prospect of losing his ungracious bride, on hearing of this step, despatched an envoy to Rome to second the demand for his release with somewhat unseemly eagerness. The emperor, as some indemnification to the duke for the loss of the rich heritage of his French bride, promised to bestow upon him the hand of the archduchess Mary, daughter of the king of the Romans, in the event of his recovering his matrimonial liberty.

Early in the year 1544, the princess again renewed her protest against the marriage at Alençon, where she was then residing with her mother, queen Marguerite; but owing to the unsettled condition of political affairs, and the vacillations of pope Paul, Jeanne was not released from an alliance so odious to her until the spring of the year 1545. She was then an inmate of the castle of Plessis-les-Tours, where probably she went at the suggestion of the king, to make a final declaration respecting this marriage, that at a distance from her kindred, and therefore beyond their personal influence, this act might be deemed conclusive and satisfactory by the Holy See. During this interval, the princess had completely recovered her favour with the king, which had been seriously shaken by her opposition to his command. The princess had been chosen by Francis to be god-mother to his infant grand-daughter Elizabeth, the child of the dauphin Henry, and of

Catherine de Medici. The christening of the princess was solemnized with great pomp at Fontainebleau, her other godmother being Eleanor, consort of king Francis; the godfather was Henry VIII. of England, represented at the ceremony by Dudley, lord Lisle, admiral of England, and by Thomas, lord Cheney, who bestowed upon the infant princess the name of Elizabeth.[1]

It was a few months subsequently to this ceremony, about Easter of the year 1545, that Jeanne took leave of her royal relatives, and attended by the baillive de Caen, she proceeded to Plessis. Easter-day fell that year on the fifth of April; high mass was chanted in the castle chapel in the presence of the princess, and her household, and a most illustrious assemblage of prelates and nobles, who had journeyed to Tours expressly to witness the ceremony of Jeanne's fourth, and final protest against her compulsory espousals at Châtellerault. Amongst other personages present, were the cardinal de Tournon prime minister of Francis, the count de Saint-Maurice ambassador of the emperor, Pierre Palmier archbishop of Vienne, Philip de Cossé-Brissac bishop of Coutances, Philibert Babou bishop of Angoulême, and Pierre du Châtel bishop of Tulle and Maçon. At the conclusion of mass, the princess advanced, and standing in the centre of the chapel, addressed the assemblage with great self-possession and dignity. "Messeigneurs," said she, "I have already protested against, and caused declarations to be put on record concerning the marriage which it was once wished to contract between Monsieur the duke of Cleves and myself.

[1] Godefroy, Grand Cérém. de France, t. II., p. 156.

I furthermore declare in the presence of you all, messeigneurs the cardinal, archbishop and bishops here assembled, that it is my wish and desire to persevere in those my said declarations and protests, and that I persist in them, and will never retract. My lords, in order the better to inform you of my will and intent, I have drawn up a memorial, and signed it with my own hand. This memorial and protest I am now to read to you; and, my lords, by that holy sacrament I am about to receive, I swear, and affirm, that what is here written contains nothing but the truth, in all which things I steadily persist." Jeanne then unfolded a sheet of paper which she held in her hand, and distinctly read as follows:

"Monseigneur le cardinal, and you, my lords the bishops and prelates here assembled, in your presence, and in that of the notaries here in this place, I declare that I have before written and signed with my own hand two protests—one of these protests was signed upon the day upon which certain solemnities of betrothment passed between monseigneur the duke of Cleves and myself—the other, on the day preceding this said pretended betrothal—both of which protestations I will presently produce, and cause to be read before you. I swear, and make affirmation on God's holy gospels, that I made, wrote, and signed them on these said days, and, moreover, caused them to be witnessed for greater surety by those whose signatures appear with my own. I swear and make affirmation that they contain the truth; and that such was then my will and intention, in the which

I have since persisted until the time that I made the declaration now before you in the month of October last, in the town of Alençon—which declaration I likewise swear and affirm contains the truth; also, that I still persist in the same will; and intend to maintain it now, and for the future—to wit, that I never had the will, nor am I so inclined at the present moment, to bind myself under the law of marriage to the said sieur de Cleves, nor to accept him for my husband; but, on the contrary, all that has passed in the matter of these said pretended betrothal and solemnities, was done according to the statement contained in my said protestations. I, therefore, demand judicial testimony of this my declaration made before you, my lords, the cardinal and bishops here assembled, from the notaries present for that purpose.

(Signed) "JEHANNE DE NAVARRE."[1]

Laying her hand upon an open missal presented by one of the prelates, Jeanne d'Albret took a solemn oath that all she had read and signed was the truth; she then delivered the documents to the cardinal de Tournon, who transmitted them by courier to Rome, together with a statement, verified on oath by queen Marguerite, and signed by the senéchale de Poitou, lady of honour to Marguerite, and by the baillive de Caen, containing the circumstances connected with the ceremony performed at Châtellerault. A few weeks afterwards Paul IV.

[1] Papiers d'Etat du cardinal de Granvelle, publiés d'après les MSS. de Besançon, document 30, t. III.

published a decree annulling the marriage,[1] and permitting the parties to contract fresh alliance.

Thus the princess again became free; and the marriage so peremptorily insisted upon by king Francis, was as unceremoniously dissolved. Its evil influence, however, clung throughout life to the princess, shadowing her at times like a dark cloud. The doubts, which this prior alliance inspired, marred the happiness of the early part of her career as a wife; while she lived to hear the legitimacy of her children questioned, inasmuch as it was averred that, contrary to the solemn oath of the princess and her mother, her marriage with the duke of Cleves, had been full and perfect in every respect; while the papal bull cancelled the union on the ground only of its having been nominally contracted. The princess, however, dreamed not of the sorrows of the future; but, says the historian, Olhagaray, "the visage of our princess Jeanne grew serene again, her deportment became cheerful, and she consoled herself as best she might; for it had appeared very grievous to her to quit France to become the spouse of a simple duke, when she could choose amongst the greatest princes of the blood royal; in fact, the emperor mightily desired to obtain her for his son Philip, and would have bestowed great advantages on our king Henry, her father; who, nevertheless, refused to consent to an alliance so hurtful to the crown of France; or still less to have it believed that he desired such an event."[2]

[1] The papal bull, decreeing the dissolution of the marriage between the duke of Cleves and Jeanne d'Albret, was registered by the parliament of Paris after its promulgation.

[2] Olhagaray, Hist. de Foix, Béarn et Navarre, p. 504.

CHAPTER II.

Death of Francis I.—The princess Jeanne holds mourning state at Mont de Marsan—Changes at court—Henry II.—Diane de Poitiers Catherine de Medici—The prince of Spain renews his suit for the hand of Jeanne d'Albret—Desire of the emperor Charles V. to negotiate this alliance—The project is opposed by the king of France—Departure of Jeanne for Fontainebleau—Profusion of the princess—Her letter to the chancellor of Alençon—The dukes de Vendôme and de Guise become suitors for her hand—Character of Antoine de Bourbon—The duke de Guise—King Henry supports the suit of the duke de Guise—Reply made to the king by Jeanne d'Albret—Marriage of the princess Jeanne with the duke de Vendôme—Her marriage articles—She visits Béarn—She is acknowledged by the states of Béarn as heiress presumptive of the principality—Death of queen Marguerite—Affliction of the princess—Her love of study—Her despondency at her want of offspring—Negotiation for the marriage of the king of Navarre with the infanta Juana of Spain—Pregnancy of Jeanne d'Albret—Her correspondence with the duchess de Guise—Birth of the duke de Beaumont—The baillive d'Orleans is appointed *gouvernante* to the infant prince—Her injurious treatment of the prince—His decease—Birth of the count de Marle—Journey of the princess into Béarn—Joy of the king of Navarre—Accident which befel the infant prince at Mont de Marsan—His death—Anger of the king—His reproaches to his daughter—Engagement exacted by the states of Béarn from the duke and duchess de Vendôme—Their departure from Béarn—Jeanne takes up her abode at the castle of La Flèche—Her correspondence with the duchess de

Guise—Her third pregnancy—Departure of the duchess de Vendôme for the camp in Picardy—Accident which happened to her there—A deputation from the states of Béarn waits on the princess Jeanne—She receives the envoys at Compiègne—Her journey into Béarn—Birth of Henry IV.—Incidents connected with that event—The king of Navarre takes the sole charge of the infant prince—His treatment of the babe—He presents the child to the nobles of Béarn and Foix—The king confides his infant heir to the care of Jeanne Fourçade—Baptism of the prince—Convalescence of the duchess de Vendôme—She returns into France—Her meeting with the duke de Vendôme at Estrée-au-Pont—She retires to the castle of Brenne—Correspondence of the princess with the duchess de Montmorency—Decease of the king of Navarre.

THE next event that exercised important influence over the fate of Jeanne d'Albret, was the death of her uncle, Francis I, which occurred on the 31st of March, 1547. Queen Marguerite was sojourning at the nunnery of Tusson, in Angoumois, at the time of her brother's decease; the king of Navarre was at Mont de Marsan; and the princess Jeanne an inmate of the castle of Plessis-les-Tours. The princess immediately joined her father at Mont de Marsan; and there they together held their mourning state for the deceased king, during the space of a month.

A thorough change ensued on the death of king Francis, in the politics of the court, and the cabinet; those personages whose influence had hitherto been paramount—the veteran statesmen, and favourites of the late king—received courteous dismissal from office, or a peremptory mandate of exile from the capital, according as they had rendered themselves more or less obnoxious to the powers then in the ascendant. The cardinal de Tournon, the admiral d'Annebaut,

the secretary of state Bayard, the duchesse d'Estampes, and numbers of minor individuals composing the privy council of the deceased king, were amongst those thus punished. The constable de Montmorency, who had been deprived of his dignities, and exiled to his castle of Ecouen, by king Francis, was recalled, and invested with powers of unlimited extent, by his sovereign.[1] The queen of Navarre, though treated with the greatest attention and respect by her nephew, king Henry II, lost her political influence—a reverse which affected her not; as, absorbed by sorrow for the loss she had sustained, Marguerite, during the remainder of her life, shunned the world, and devoted herself to prayer, and to works of charity.

The dominant characters of the new court were the duchesse de Valentinois, the queen Catherine de Medici, Montmorency, and the princes of the house of Lorraine Guise. For undivided possession of Henry's confidence, and for control over his counsels, these noble personages contended during the entire reign. Henry II. was a prince of mediocre capacity: impetuous, and daring like his father, he possessed not the political capacity of Francis I. His disposition was reserved; and instead of that gracious affability and ready wit, which endeared his father to all classes of his subjects, Henry's manners were cold, and often ungracious. In person, he was very handsome; his stature rose above the ordinary standard: he was an accomplished swordsman, and excelled in martial games and amusements.

Henry loved splendour as his father had done: the

[1] Mathieu, Hist. de Henri II., p. 32.

magnificence which surrounded Francis I. seemed but the dazzling emanation of his princely qualities; while the diadem reflected its lustre on his son, and successor. The attachments of the king were permanent; his constancy was irreproachable in love, as in friendship. He was slow in yielding to external influences; but his good opinion won, the individual so favoured might enjoy this distinction without dread of reverse. Henry loved to be surrounded by the most brilliant cavaliers, and ladies of the court; not, indeed, like his royal father, to be the cynosure, guiding all, and the divinity, at whose shrine every one offered incense; but, standing aloof with Diane de Poitiers at his side, Henry loved to listen in silence, and in seeming indifference; to the witty sallies of his courtiers.

Diane de Poitiers, duchesse de Valentinois, was the centre from whence the rays of Henry's royal favour emanated. She regulated the king's preferences, his dislikes, and his political prejudices. On the accession of Henry II., this remarkable woman, at the age of forty-nine, ruled the king, with a sway of almost magical power. Her beauty, once of dazzling lustre, was somewhat on the wane; yet even at this period, not a single silver hair, we are told, mingled with the tresses which adorned the brow of the stately sénéchale. A daughter of the noble Provençal house of St. Vallier, the widow of Louis de Brezé, grand sénéchal of Normandy, Diane de Poitiers, though the mistress of the king, never forgot her illustrious ancestry. Scorning the paltry intrigues through which the duchesse d'Estampes, during the late reign, prolonged her empire,

Diane governed the court with the haughty fearlessness which might have appertained to Catherine de Medici herself; content, whenever it should be the will of the king, to resign her power, and retire to her dower-palace at Anet. Her powerful mind inspired vigour and energy into Henry's counsels. She was liberal, amiable, and generous; her discretion and tact have been greatly lauded; and her judgment was generally sound on political affairs, except in matters affecting religion; for the very zeal kindled by a sense of her position at court—a position which her conscience rebuked—warped her liberality, and led her to make atonement in the way deemed most meritorious by the church.

As the characters of the constable de Montmorency, and the princes of the house of Lorraine Guise, will develop themselves gradually, according as their influences affected the destinies of the princess Jeanne d'Albret, we pass to the second dominant person at the court of St. Germain—one, whose silent influence pervaded everywhere, but who attracted little observation, just as in gazing on a mighty river, the streamlet from whence the thronging waters take their source, is forgotten by the beholder—the queen, Catherine de Medici. The wonderful ascendancy possessed by the young queen, whose beauty of countenance made no great impression on the astute ambassador of Venice, Giovanni Cappello, though he condescended to pronounce her modesty of demeanour laudable,[1] was rather

[1] Tommasio, Relations des ambassadeurs Vénitiens sur les affaires de France au 16ème siècle.

felt, than acknowledged. From the period (1533) when her uncle, pope Clement VII., confided Catherine to the care of king Francis, as the bride of Henry, duke of Orleans, second prince of the blood, and she entered upon that brilliant career, once destined for Jeanne d'Albret, her life was chequered by extraordinary adversity. Catherine was then fourteen years old: an orphan from her birth, her life had been spent partly in the turbulent city of Florence; partly at Rome, under the auspices of her kinsmen, Leo X., and Clement VII., pontiffs of the race of Medici. Her talents had been cultivated—for Catherine possessed the literary tastes of her race in an eminent degree—but her moral education was totally neglected by Clement VII., and her mind suffered to mould itself, so that its dictates became pliable to her personal interests. From her aunt Clarice,[1] consort of the exiled republican, Philippo Strozzi, Catherine received an early initiation into the tortuous policy, and the system of temporizing deceit, successfully practised by the petty rulers of Italy. An apt pupil, as much of this crafty theory was imbibed by the youthful heiress of the Medici, as suited her circumstances, and no more. It is related that the parting word of her uncle, Clement VII., when he took leave of his niece at Marseilles, after her marriage, was the counsel, "*fatti figliuoli de ogni maniera.*" Catherine, however, was too politic to follow her uncle's advice. Her conduct became cited as a model of feminine propriety; and she gained the affection, and the powerful support of Francis I., and of his sister, the

[1] Daughter of Pietro de Medici and Alfonsina d'Ursino, his consort.

queen of Navarre. So flattering did Catherine find this tribute to the decorum of her demeanour, that it rendered her comparatively indifferent to the neglect with which she was treated by her boy-husband, the duke of Orleans. During the vicissitudes of the subsequent ten years that she passed as dauphiness—a period during which her position was forlorn, her father-in-law, the king, being the only person able and willing to protect her against the hatred of her husband, who taunted her with her plebeian origin, and her want of offspring—Catherine bowed before the storm, to rise again with serene brow, and composed resolve. During this interval, a frightful malady threatened permanently to impair her mental and bodily faculties. Catherine, however, desponded not; and, in due time, her recovery was complete. Again, after the decease of the dauphin Francis, in 1536, dark rumours of poison and assassination were current; and the withering blight of suspicion affixed itself on the fame of his young sister-in-law, Catherine de Medici. Catherine uttered no defence; she put forth no protest; her resignation under the calumny, for the accusation was false, served her better, as she had well divined, than the most fervid of denials. The sword of every cavalier of the court sprang from its scabbard to defend the fame of that melancholy young girl, whose seventeen years were already darkened with unprecedented sorrow.

Next came the project of divorce, which the dauphin formally presented for the deliberation of the privy-council. The heart of Catherine quailed with apprehension: she was childless, friendless, powerless. All the

faculties of fascination which she possessed, Catherine quietly brought into play to defeat the measure. Her weapons were the prejudices, the jealousies, the hatreds of those high in power. With unparalleled dexterity she wielded her arms; for no one knew better how to probe the weak points, and the foibles of men than the young dauphiness. She triumphed: the suit for divorce was withdrawn by the absolute command of the king, and the assent of his cabinet. The indignation of the dauphin was great; he, however, consoled himself with the reflection that one day he should likewise reign. The star of Catherine de Medici, nevertheless, still shone. Warned by her past peril, she contrived to propitiate her husband; so that, on the death of her protector, Francis I, she sat enthroned in the halls of the Louvre, her brow circled by the diadem of Jeanne d'Evreux,[1] with a fair young dauphin by her side, now a proud, if not a happy mother.

Queen Catherine was not a woman of genius. She possessed in lieu, promptness of action, and a facility of resource which were seldom at fault. She read with precision the intricacies of the most versatile character; for her natural powers of observation had been quickened by the adverse destiny which surrounded her from her cradle; and by the ever present consciousness that her enemies were far more numerous than her friends. During the seventy-four years of her life, it was Catherine's luckless fate to combat the hostility of

[1] The crown of Jeanne d'Evreux, consort of Charles IV., was always used at the coronation of a queen of France, as that of Charlemagne was at the crowning of the king.

faction without respite. She possessed a perfect command of sentiment and feeling; even the very expression of her features was brought into subjection to her will, though, when strongly moved, the flashing glance of her dark, prominent eyes betrayed the passionate impulses so resolutely repressed. Her attire was skilfully adapted to display her personal charms. Her complexion during her youth was eminently beautiful; and Phidias, himself, could not have desired a fairer model for the graceful form of his Venus de Medici than the exquisite figure of the great-grand-daughter of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

Catherine never designedly made an open enemy; if such she possessed it was greatly against her will, and arose from some mutual antipathy which she found it impossible to assimilate. The graceful figure, the gliding step, the sweet smile, and the courteous words of queen Catherine when she met her court, beamed upon every one; for it was her policy to conciliate all, from Madame de Valentinois, to the lowest page of the chamber. Such was the princess against whom Jeanne d'Albret wielded a life-long contest; opposed in interests, in principles, and sympathies, the controversies between these royal ladies, each remarkable for mental powers of rare description, afford a subject of absorbing interest.

During the first few months of the new reign, the princess Jeanne was permitted to remain in Béarn with her royal mother, whose failing health excited alarm. Though but recently released from the unwelcome bond which united her to the duke of Cleves, the heiress of Béarn soon became again the object of speculation and interest to numberless suitors for her hand. Amongst

other personages, Philip of Spain, again renewed his pretensions for the favour of the princess, the greater portion of whose inheritance was already incorporated with the Spanish monarchy. Philip's Portuguese consort died in giving birth to a prince, after an union with her husband of little more than a year. The emperor manifested the same eager wish to obtain the hand of Jeanne for his son; the sovereignty of Navarre, wrested so arbitrarily from the house of Albret, weighed heavily on the conscience of Charles. The restoration of the kingdom having become impracticable in a political sense; the emperor earnestly desired to legalize its acquisition by this alliance. In the will which the emperor Charles dictated at Augsburg, in the year 1548, he emphatically admonished his son to contract marriage, either with the sister of the king of France, or with the heiress of Albret, "a princess in vigorous health, of admirable character, virtuous, and of heart worthy of her birth."[1] The emperor proceeds to advise his son, in case his alliance should be negotiated, to enter into a proper understanding with the princess relative to their mutual claims on Navarre, and to make a compensation for the past, satisfactory to the house of Albret.[2]

The French court, however, prevented the possibility of negotiation, for which the King of Navarre was well disposed, by sending a mandate to Pau, requiring the

[1] De Thou, Hist. de son temps. liv. xxi. Sandoval, Hist. del emperador Carlos V. libro. xxx.

[2] Papiers d'Etat du cardinal Granvelle—Testament politique de l'empereur Charles Quint.

presence of the princess at Fontainebleau. Jeanne had then nearly completed her twentieth year. The expression of her countenance was pleasing and animated, and her demeanour majestic. Jeanne's readiness of speech, and her frank and open temper, secured her great consideration at the court of her royal kinsman, Henry II. The polished sophistry indulged in by the queen, was totally repugnant to the temper of the princess; and in consequence of the somewhat abrupt retorts by which she repulsed Catherine's silken phrases, commenced that alienation between these princesses so especially unfortunate for Jeanne, as she remained long ignorant of the dislike which she had inspired.

The household of the princess continued to be maintained on the same scale of magnificence as it had been ordered by Francis I. Queen Marguerite complains, in her correspondence, of the vast expenses which Jeanne's establishment entailed; and she wrote more than one peremptory letter to M. d'Izerney, steward of the household to the princess, requiring him to introduce strict economy in the departments over which he presided.[1]

The queen likewise thought proper to admonish her daughter to be less profuse in her expenditure; but, like her uncle, Francis I., Jeanne never knew how to refuse a suppliant; and she often bestowed her benefactions in so lavish a mode, that not an *écu* remained at her treasurer's disposal. One of the earliest letters extant, written by the princess Jeanne, is a pecuniary

[1] See Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême. vol. II. p. 491.

appeal to her mother, through the chancellor of the duchy of Alençon, in favour of her nurse, and probably made after she had exhausted her own resources. The letter is as follows:

THE PRINCESS JEANNE OF NAVARRE, TO THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF ALENCON.

"Mon compère. Since I last wrote to you, my nurse has been with me to say that some man wishes to marry her daughter, but that he expects a dowry with her of a thousand francs. As I understand that the queen, my mother, has given you power to act for her in these matters, I pray you write to her a word on the subject; and, out of love to me, entreat her so that she may, at least, bestow something on my said nurse, in furtherance of this her project; in doing which thing you will confer a favour upon one who, acknowledging that it is done for her sake, will never prove ungrateful; but will supplicate always, that our Lord, mon compère, may grant you your petitions, of the which, I feel assurance, that I shall partake, and profit.

"Vostre bonne commère, et amie,

"JEHANNE DE NAVARRE."[1]

We are nowhere told the result of this curious application, preferred in terms so characteristic, and matter of fact. The attention of the princess, nevertheless, was occupied at this period, by the homage of two of the most exalted cavaliers of the court, Antoine, duke de Vendôme, and François, duke de Guise, who had

[1] Ancien Fonds Français, 8495, p. 6., MS. Bibl. Roy.—Inedited.

each become an eager aspirant for her hand, from the moment that the king effectually placed his veto on the suit of the prince of Spain.

Antoine de Bourbon was the eldest son of Charles, duke de Vendôme, who died at Amiens in 1536, and of Françoise, sister of the duke d'Alençon, a prince, the first husband of the mother of the princess Jeanne. The most intimate friendship existed between the queen of Navarre and her sister-in-law, the duchess de Vendôme; a fact, which doubtless encouraged Antoine to press his suit with the princess. The duke de Vendôme was born in the castle of La Fère, on the 18th of April, 1518.[1] He had, therefore, entered his twentieth year, when he sought the hand of the princess. The character of Antoine de Bourbon presents one of those strange anomalies, where the most captivating address conceals the gravest moral deficiency. Superficial and frivolous, the duke disarmed censure by his frank admission of ignorance, and his good-natured condescension. His disposition was vacillating and uncertain; perpetually wavering, and devoid of steady principle, he invariably became the victim of those who last possessed his ear, being himself totally regardless of antecedent engagements. His temper was excitable; in the first heat of passion, his resentments appeared unbridled, and his energy irresistible. His anger pacified, all sense of wrong to himself, or of justice to others, passed away, and Antoine became again the luxurious, effeminate prince.

[1] Thevet, Vies des Hommes Illustres.—Vie d'Antoine de Bourbon, t. II.

As a soldier, however, the duke de Vendôme had achieved considerable repute; he had bravely served the king in several campaigns; but his love of ease, and his capricious temper, were as adverse to his attainment of military excellence, as they were inimical to his social and political renown. Antoine had a noble presence; he was upright in figure, and carried himself with grace. In his attire, he was fastidious in the extreme; and the fashion of the jewels, and of the habits worn by M. de Vendôme was eagerly copied by the courtiers. His popularity with the fair dames of the court was great; the manner in which he raised his plumed *chapeau*, when paying obeisance to a lady, was deemed a model of elegance; and at the court balls, he yielded the palm to no cavalier in address, as, leading a fair partner, he threaded the mazes of the lively *couranto*.

At the conference of Nice, in 1538, pope Paul III. had offered to bestow upon the duke de Vendôme the hand of his niece, Victoria Farnese; but political events prevented the accomplishment of this alliance.[1] Again, soon after the accession of Henry II., the king had proposed to give his sister, the princess Marguerite, in marriage to the duke de Vendôme, who held the first rank in the kingdom, after the dauphin, and his brothers. Marguerite, then in her twenty-seventh year, was not dazzled by the duke's popular deportment; and she coldly excused her rejection of his suit by observing, "that she would never condescend to espouse a subject of the king, her brother's, however illustrious might be

[1] Mezeray, Abrégé Chron.—Vie de François I. t. II.

his rank."[1] On the arrival of Jeanne, at the court of France, the duke de Vendôme was free and heart-whole; for the attachments of so capricious a cavalier, notorious though they might be, left neither trace nor impression behind. The animation, and the joyous spirits of the princess were greatly admired by the duke; even the occasional perversity of her humour seemed a charm to the fancy of one so sated with adulation. It has been said that those persons whose characters present the strongest contrast assimilate best together; be this as it may, Jeanne, with her serious mind, her worship of truth, and her commanding talents, returned duke Antoine's regard, over whom she soon exercised an extraordinary degree of influence.

King Henry's interest at this period, however, was given to Antoine's rival, the duke de Guise,[2] whose favour remained paramount throughout this reign. The queen, also, who secretly detested the duke de Vendôme, and his flattery, feeling that he was almost as great an adept as herself in that mystic cabala called *l'eau bénite de la cour*, supported the pretensions of the prince of Lorraine.

The character of the duke de Guise presented a complete contrast to that of Antoine de Bourbon; he possessed many of those sterling qualities in which the latter was totally deficient. Already François de Lor-

[1] Brantôme, Dames Illustres—Vie de Marguerite de France.

[2] At the period which we are now treating, the old duke Claude de Guise, was living, and his son bore the title of duke d'Aumale. As the death of the duke de Guise soon ensued, we have given François de Lorraine, the title of duke de Guise, to avoid the confusion arising from a variety of appellations for the same personage.

raine was the darling of the populace; and whenever he appeared in Paris, the streets of the capital echoed with the cry, "a Guise! a Guise!"—the name destined, ere a quarter of a century lapsed, to fall with omen so portentous on the ear of the grandsons of Francis I. Seldom does the page of history present the assemblage of so many brilliant qualities united in the person of one individual, as is displayed in the character of François, the great duke de Guise—the soaring ambition of his race seemed but the one alloy to mar its excellence. With liberal hand, the duke distributed his vast revenues; munificent was his patronage of learning and art; his affability corresponded with his lofty rank. The charm of the duke's address was such, that the king himself succumbed to its fascination. "Henry II. treated this prince almost as an equal," says Davila,[1] "admitting him to his conversation, his recreations, and to share in those bodily exercises which were welcome, and suitable to the age and tastes of each." The duke's military talents were universally acknowledged; and the French, with acclamations, hailed him as the successor of the young hero of Cerizolles, the lamented count d'Anguien. In a court adorned by such men as Brissac,[2] Vieilleville, Nevers,[3] Montmorency,[4] and St. André—soldiers, statesmen, and wits—men, who had converted by their exquisite tact, the *metier* of the courtier into a veritable

[1] Davila, Hist. des Guerres Civiles de France, t. 1.

[2] Timoléon de Cossé, maréchal, count de Brissac.

[3] François de Cleves, duke de Nevers, son of Charles, count de Nevers and Marie d'Albret.

[4] Anne de Montmorency, the renowned Constable, son of Guillaume, baron de Montmorency, and Anne Pot, born in 1493.

science—it was no slight triumph for François de Lorraine to maintain pre-eminence. The eldest of six[1] brothers—each of whom individually possessed capacity to confer distinction on his house—the duke de Guise seemed especially calculated to become the leader of a powerful faction, by his command of temper, and the perseverance which characterized his actions. He possessed not the fiery eloquence, nor the subtle craft of his celebrated brother, the cardinal de Lorraine; nor yet the latter's versatile intellect, which seemed created to compass every possible casualty, and circumstance. "The six brothers of the house of Guise," says the Venetian ambassador, Jean Michiel,[2] "possessed revenues, which, including their paternal patrimony, their ecclesiastical preferments, and the posts bestowed upon them by the king, amounted together to the sum of 600,000 francs.[3] The cardinal (de Lorraine) also possesses ecclesiastical benefices yielding him a yearly income of 300,000 francs. This great wealth, added to the lustre of their rank, their piety, their beauty of person, and the harmony which subsists between them, elevates these princes above all the other nobles of the realm."

The rivalry between the duke de Vendôme and François de Lorraine, divided the court from the

[1] Charles de Lorraine, cardinal-archbishop of Rheims, known as the cardinal de Lorraine; Claude, duc d'Aumale; Louis, cardinal de Guise; François, grand-prieur of France; Réné, marquis d'Elbœu; sons of Claude de Lorraine, first duke de Guise, and of Antoinette de Bourbon, sister of Charles, duke de Vendôme.

[2] Tommasio, Relations des ambassadeurs Venetiens au 16ème siècle.

[3] The wealth of the house of Guise was enormous, when it is considered that money in those days had fifteen times its present value.

commencement of the reign of Henry II. Favoured by the king, and by madame de Valentinois, whose daughter had espoused his brother,[1] the duke de Guise, supported by the additional *prestige* of his well-merited popularity, found it no difficult task to eclipse the frivolous Antoine de Bourbon. The dissension between these princes was augmented by the suit which the duke de Guise was daring enough to make, for the hand of Jeanne d'Albret. The self-possessed dignity of the duke de Guise, however, offended the pride of the princess; and she expressed great indignation that he should presume to place his pretensions on a level with those of Vendôme, and her other royal suitors. The king, nevertheless, persisted in urging the suit of his favourite, whom he overwhelmed with flattering marks of distinction in the presence of the princess.

The queen of Navarre encouraged her daughter in her rejection of this alliance. In Marguerite's eyes, the accession of dignity gained by the house of Guise, by the union of the duke's sister, Marie de Lorraine, with James V., of Scotland, was more than balanced by the marriage which the duke d'Aumale had contracted with the daughter of madame de Valentinois. One day, when king Henry was warmly recommending the princess to accept the suit of the duke de Guise; and assuring her that the diadem of her ancestors could not be better bestowed than upon so princely a cavalier, Jeanne indignantly replied "What, monseigneur, would

[1] Claude, duc d'Aumale, espoused Louise de Brèze, in the chapel of the Louvre. She was the daughter of Louis, count de Maulevrier, grand sénéchal of Normandy, by Diane de Poitiers.

you indeed permit that the duchesse d'Aumale, who now feels herself honoured by performing the office of my train-bearer, should become my sister-in-law; so that this duchesse, the daughter of madame de Valentinois, through the marriage which you advocate, may acquire instead the right to walk by my side?"[1] King Henry made no reply to this impetuous speech; but he desisted, thenceforth, in his attempt to obtain Jeanne's hand for his favourite. Anxious, however, to defeat the schemes of those who would have united her to the prince of Spain, Henry transferred the weight of his royal influence to the suit of the duke de Vendôme. But the courtship of the duke still suffered formidable obstacles, from the sudden unwillingness manifested by the king of Navarre to consent to the alliance, as soon as Antoine's pretensions had received king Henry's sanction; and the marriage, in consequence, had become one of probable accomplishment. The prodigal character of the duke, excited the apprehension of the king of Navarre; but the reluctance of the latter served only to increase the suspicion of the king, as to his ulterior designs, respecting the bestowal of his daughter's hand. This distrust, added to the entreaties of the princess herself, induced the king to summon the king and queen of Navarre somewhat peremptorily from Béarn, in order that the affair might be discussed and the marriage celebrated without unnecessary delay.[2]

It is asserted that queen Marguerite, also, opposed

[1] Légende de Charles, cardinal de Lorraine, p. 12. Mém. de Condé, t. VI.

[2] Vauvilliers, t. I. p. 25.

her child's inclinations; and positively refused to sanction the suit of the duke de Vendôme. No reason has been assigned by historians for this pretended reluctance on the part of the queen, which probably existed not all. Antoine was the son of Marguerite's sister-in-law, and old friend, Françoise, sister of the duke d'Alençon; and Vendôme's known inclination for the doctrines of the Reformed Church,—a predilection, which might be supposed as likely to give umbrage to the king of Navarre—was calculated to produce a contrary effect on the mind of queen Marguerite, always the ardent upholder of the reformation. The absolute command of king Henry, at length, compelled the assent of the king of Navarre; and Marguerite, whatever might have been the nature of her objections, submitted to receive her son-in-law with very good grace; and at queen Catherine's public entry into the city of Lyons, the last state ceremonial in which Marguerite participated, duke Antoine rode by the side of the litter, in which the queen and her daughter sat.[1] The affability displayed by Marguerite on this occasion towards the duke, was remarked by many spectators of the pageant.

The king of Navarre, meantime, was propitiated by a pension of 15,000 livres—a sum to be levied by his own officers on the customs of Gascoigne; and the promise, so often fruitlessly given, of aid to recover the kingdom of Navarre.[2] The satisfaction evinced by the princess, and the fervour of her assurances as to the stability of prin-

[1] Godefroy, Grand cérémonial de France, t. I. p. 850.
[2] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. I. p. 26.

ciple possessed by her affianced husband, did not reconcile the king of Navarre to her union, nor mitigate his forebodings as to its ultimate issue. Some days, therefore, before his daughter's marriage-contract received the public assent of Henry, the king of Navarre summoned the duke to his presence, and addressed him in language of serious reproof, for the frivolity of his pursuits, his extravagance, and his dissipated life.[1] The duke patiently submitted to the rebuke; and assured the king of Navarre, that the possession of his daughter's hand, being a priceless boon, would for the future render him indifferent to dissipated pleasures. As an earnest of his good intentions, Antoine proceeded to reform his household, and to dismiss many useless retainers, whose brawls and profligate orgies reflected disgrace on their master's name.

The marriage contract between Jeanne d'Albret, and Antoine de Bourbon, was signed at Moulins, October 20th, 1548, in the presence of Henry and Catherine, the king and queen of Navarre, the duchesse de Vendôme, the cardinal de Bourbon, and other noble personages. The king and queen of Navarre gave their daughter a dowry in money of one hundred thousand gold crowns, Tournois. Being still distrustful of Antoine's promises of amendment, and believing that his habits of extravagant expenditure were incorrigible, the king of Navarre stipulated that this sum should be paid in yearly payments of twenty-five thousand livres, ten thousand livres of which were to be devoted for the

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. II. p. 26.

sole and separate use of his daughter, while her husband was only to receive interest on the remainder The duke de Vendôme, on his part, settled lands on his future bride, to the annual amount of twelve thousand livres; and engaged to present her with jewels of the value of ten thousand gold crowns, which jewels were to become the personal property of the princess. As king Henry considered that this jointure of twelve thousand livres was a dower of scarcely adequate proportion for a lady who brought a crown to the house of Vendôme, the cardinal de Bourbon, the younger brother of duke Antoine, was induced to offer the lands of Condé and La Ferté, a part of his own heritage, as a free gift, for the benefit of his future sister-in-law; a cession, which was accepted by the king, and assigned to the princess. It was, moreover, stipulated, that in the event of children being born to Antoine and Jeanne, that their eldest son should succeed to the united heritages of his parents; and that he should bear the joint arms of Navarre and France. In case of widowhood, Jeanne was declared sole guardian and tutoress of her children. As if a foreshadowing of the dark future had been legible on the pale brow of the young Catherine de Medici, as she listened with her accustomed composure to the rehearsing of the marriage articles, queen Marguerite caused a clause to be inserted, wherein it was expressly stated that Jeanne was to be responsible to no one for the education and nurture which it might please her to bestow upon her children; and that until her son attained the age of eighteen years, he was to be subject to her sole government. The contract was witnessed by

three public notaries; and signed by the secretaries of state, Bochetal, Clausse, and Du Tiers.[1]

The following day, the marriage ceremony was performed in the chapel of the castle of Moulins, in the presence of the court, the king giving away the royal bride. Early on the marriage day, however, the court was thrown into consternation indescribable, by a report of the alleged refusal of the duke de Vendôme to suffer the spousal ceremony to proceed; it was even insinuated that but from a wholesome dread of the king's wrath, the hitherto impatient bridegroom elect would have departed from Moulins at early dawn, for his castle of Châtellerault. All kinds of speculations circulated amongst the courtiers respecting this extraordinary whim of duke Antoine's; and until the bridal procession issued forth in the pomp of royal pageantry from the castle portal, many doubted whether, after all, the heiress of Navarre would wed with a Bourbon. The truth of the matter was, that during the evening of the day previous to his marriage, the duke had been assailed with terrible misgivings as to the validity of Jeanne's former marriage with the duke of Cleves.[2] His excitement increased, until at length it bordered upon frenzy; and forgetting the unmerited disgrace which his desertion would have inflicted on the young princess, whose hand he had so ardently sought, Antoine protested that nothing should induce him to perfect the alliance. In alternate paroxysms of jealous fury, and lamentation, the vacillating Antoine

[1] Contrat de marriage d'Antoine de Bourbon, et de Jeanne d'Albret. Leonard, Recueil des Traitez de Paix, &c. t. II. p. 468.

[2] Brantome, Dames illustres—Vie de Marguerite de Valois.

spent several hours, until he was soothed somewhat, by the solemn, and reiterated assurances of queen Marguerite, of madame de Silly, and of the sénéchale of Poitou,[1] that the duke of Cleves had placed the princess Jeanne under her mother's protection, immediately on the termination of the ceremonial performed at Châtellerault, and had never subsequently conversed with her, but in the queen's presence.

King Henry, on his return from the nuptial ceremony, publicly signed the marriage contract of the duke de Guise, with Anne d'Esté, daughter of the duke of Ferrara, and grand-daughter of Louis XII.[2] Aware of the mortification inflicted on his magnificent favourite, by the unceremonious way in which his suit had been rejected by the princess of Navarre, Henry devised this flattering method of reparation. Anne d'Esté was the king's first cousin; and held precisely the same degree of affinity to the royal family of France, as did the duchesse de Vendôme. She was beautiful in person; and having been educated under the rigid *surveillance* of her mother the princess Rénée, her rare acquirements rendered her a suitable consort for the duke. Apart from the territorial aggrandizement, which the duke de Guise would have obtained by an alliance with the heiress of Navarre, this marriage probably afforded him greater domestic felicity, than he would have enjoyed as the husband of Jeanne d'Albret. The gentle,

[1] Louise de Daillon, wife of the seigneur de la Chateigneraye, chamberlain in ordinary to the king, and sénéchal of Poitou. Madame de la Chateigneraye was first lady of honour to the queen of Navarre.

[2] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret.

and womanly disposition of the duchess de Guise, endeared her to her husband, whose haughty independence of character would not have brooked the semblance of rivalry in a consort of even queenly rank.

On the termination of their marriage festivities, at Moulins, the duke and duchess de Vendôme retired from court, and took up their abode in the castle of La Fère, in Picardy, of which province Antoine was governor. After making a brief sojourn there, Antoine and Jeanne journeyed to Pau, in order that the young duchess might receive the homage of the states of Béarn; and the formal recognition of her right of eventual succession, as heiress of the principality. Her reception was enthusiastic. The people flocked to behold her again; and to welcome the consort she had chosen, whose religious sympathies were hailed with rapture by the Béarnois.[1] The duke, with the happy tact which rescued him from so many difficulties, perceived that the loyal inhabitants of Béarn had few things more at heart, than reverence for their good queen Marguerite; and attachment to the religion which she had been so instrumental in establishing amongst them. To queen Marguerite, therefore, and to her Lutheran ministers, Antoine offered devoted homage; and, consequently, he won golden opinions from all parties in the principality. The young duchess, however, too honest to feign a sympathy which, at this period, she did not feel for the reformers, steadily continued her countenance to the Romish party, and to the prelates of Béarn. Although Jeanne's belief in

[1] Olhagaray, Hist. de Foix, Béarn et Navarre, p. 505.

the doctrines inculcated from her earliest youth, had been shaken by her residence in Béarn, with queen Marguerite, she was not prepared to throw off her allegiance to Rome. With less principle, but with more policy, Antoine, whose interest was his creed throughout life, perceived the advantage which might accrue from such a course. The result realized his anticipations; for his name was associated with that of Jeanne d'Albret in the formula of recognition, by which the states of the principality acknowledged the successor of Henry and Marguerite.

As soon as the emperor was informed of the marriage of the princess with the duke de Vendôme, and of her recognition as the future sovereign of Béarn, he caused his son Philip to be proclaimed king of Navarre, in a cortés he summoned at Pamplona, for the express purpose. He, moreover, issued a proclamation, wherein that kingdom was again formally annexed, by right of conquest, to the Spanish crown. The viceroy of Navarre, the duke d'Alberquerque, even menaced the frontiers of Béarn. The king of Navarre assembled levies, and increased the fortifications of Bayonne and Navarreins; when the war, which seemed on the point of breaking forth, was arrested by the illness and death of queen Marguerite; an event which occurred at the castle of Odos, in Bigorre, December 21st, 1548.[1] From that period, the energy of the king of Navarre departed; and during the remainder of his reign, he made but feeble resistance to the hostile designs of the emperor.

[1] Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême, vol. II., p. 508.

The loss of her admirable mother was a sorrow deeply felt by the duchess de Vendôme; and years subsequently she alluded to this event as one of the greatest calamities of her life. The decease of queen Marguerite, in another point of view, was a great misfortune for her daughter; as she alone possessed salutary influence over the duke de Vendôme, and could check, in some measure, his wayward projects. Marguerite's gentle firmness, the *prestige* of her great name throughout the kingdom, and the power which she still possessed at court, imposed respect upon the unstable mind of Antoine, and commanded his deference. Though the duke de Vendôme was attached to his young wife, and proud of the esteem in which she was held by others, Jeanne's earnestness of purpose, and the diligence with which she fulfilled all her duties, seemed to rebuke his own frivolous pursuits, which seldom had higher aim than the enjoyment of the moment. No two characters could present a greater contrast than those of duke Antoine and his consort: the duchess, noble-minded, unselfish, and acting always from principle, however great the pain of self-denial; Antoine, gay, luxurious, ever ready to make compromise with conscience, unstable, and passionate. While the duke feasted royally with his boon companions, Jeanne, who inherited the literary tastes of her mother, laying aside the externals of her rank, devoted herself to the study of philosophy, theology, and history. The religious questions of the day—topics so hotly debated, and assailed with scepticism so impious—occupied much of her leisure. Jeanne weighed and discussed these opinions with fearless in-

dependence; her mind partook of the severe tone which distinguished that of her grandmother Louise de Savoye; and at this period of her history, like that celebrated princess, it is to be feared the duchesse de Vendôme viewed the divisions agitating the church more as curious speculations for the student and the politician, than as subjects of vital import, in the elucidation of which the well-being of all was involved. The duke's dissipated habits, and the familiarity to which he condescended were very displeasing to his consort, and had the effect of increasing the dignified reserve of her manner. Yet Jeanne was tenderly attached to her husband; and had he possessed wisdom enough to be guided by her penetration, his career might have been as prosperous as it proved the reverse.

Another source of disquietude, at this season, assailed the princess Jeanne: she had been a wife for upwards of two years, and yet there seemed no prospect of her bringing an heir to the houses of Vendôme and Albret. Her father, the king of Navarre, openly expressed his disappointment; a sentiment reciprocated by his subjects of Béarn. The emperor, therefore, had insidiously proposed, as the duchesse de Vendôme remained childless, that Henry himself should contract a second marriage with the infanta Juana of Spain. Charles, moreover, professed a willingness to make some important concessions relative to the kingdom of Navarre, in favour of any offspring resulting from this alliance.[1] The project was not unfavourably received by the states

[1] Olhagaray, Hist. de Foix, Béarn et Navarre, p. 507.

of Béarn, loyal as was the attachment felt for the daughter of Marguerite d'Angoulême. The king of Navarre, whose territory and alliance had been so often the object of the emperor's political combinations, received the proposal with indifference. Nevertheless, the negotiation made such progress that Jeanne's ultimate succession began to appear doubtful, even to her most faithful adherents, when the joyful news reached the principality that the duchesse de Vendôme was, at length, in a condition to fulfil the ardent aspirations of her subjects of Béarn.[1] The overtures of the emperor were forthwith negatived; for few persons were credulous enough to believe that Béarn would ever again become independent of the sway of Spain, when once a princess, daughter of the emperor, had been installed over the heritage of Albret.

Jeanne retired from court, and took up her abode in the castle of Coucy soon after her pregnancy was announced. The duke de Vendôme made some sojourn with her there. Antoine's content seemed unbounded, for already the enemies of the young duchesse, aware of her husband's besetting foible, had ventured to insinuate their conviction that Jeanne's barrenness was a judgment from heaven, sent to signify the Divine indignation at her abandonment of the duke of Cleves. After the departure of the duke de Vendôme for his military command, Jeanne wrote thus to her friend Anne d'Este, duchesse de Guise:—

[1] Olhagaray. Favyn, Hist. de Navarre, liv. 13.

THE PRINCESS JEANNE OF NAVARRE TO THE DUCHESS DE GUISE.

"MA COUSINE,

Not having been able to bid you adieu in person when I quitted the court, I have resolved to do so in writing, to beg you always to hold me in your affectionate remembrance, as I return the same to you. I assure you, ma cousine, that you have no relative better affected towards you than myself; and if you do not believe this, you do me great injury. To prevent you from becoming forgetful of the friendship which I bear you; and, also, that your esteem may not decrease for me, I will often remind you of it by letter; so you will perceive how desirous I am that our regard should continue throughout our lives. Ma cousine, if you should happen to have news from the camp, I pray you send me word of it by my messenger, and especially concerning the health of monsieur, my husband; also, of the time when they think of leaving the camp, and whether you are likely to be besieged where you are, that I may lead succours to your rescue! I beg you to present my very humble commendations to the queen, when you see her majesty. I have not dared at present to importune her with my letters. In conclusion, ma cousine, if you have tidings from the camp, I pray you send the news to me; and in return, I will pray that God may bestow upon you all that, after commending herself to your favour and affection, she desires for you, who signs herself,

"Votre bien bonne cousine, et parfaite amie,

"JEHANNE DE NAVARRE."[1]

[1] MS. Bibl. Roy. F. de Béthune, No. 8746, fol. 21.—Inedited.

On the 21st day of September, 1550, the duchesse de Vendôme gave birth to a son.[1] The young prince was named Henry; his sponsors were the king of Navarre, the count d'Enghien, and Marguerite de France, afterwards duchess de Savoye. The royal infant bore the title of duke de Beaumont, an ancient *pairie* of the house of Vendôme.

The faithful affection displayed by madame de Silly during her own infancy, determined the duchess to confide to her the care of her infant. Madame de Silly, however, had become an infirm old woman; while several years of failing health, had completely subdued her energy. She had, moreover, espoused some years previously, Jerôme Groslot, bailiff of Orleans, and chancellor of the duchy of Alençon, a man highly esteemed by queen Marguerite for his integrity and learning. Instead, therefore, of residing in the beautiful and salubrious castle of Lonray, where Jeanne d'Albret had spent so many of her early years, the baillive had taken up her abode in Orleans. The delicate health of the baillive had rendered her susceptible of the least change of temperature, so that she now passed her days in an apartment heated to an oppressive degree, and closely hung with arras. The windows, by her directions were rendered air tight; every aperture through which the slightest current could pass being closed; and a fire was kept burning in a stove throughout the twenty-four hours. To this stifling den, madame la baillive bore her helpless charge; there she kept the prince muffled

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire, p. 99. Favyn, Hist. de Navarre, liv. 14.

in the barbarous appendages to baby-toilette of those days, whilst she refused to permit him to be carried into the open air, even during the finest weather. The baillive held tenaciously to the doctrine that heat matured all things; and when remonstrated with on the treatment of her nurseling, her invariable reply was, "*Laissez l'enfant! il vaut mieux suer que trembler!*" The consequence of this regimen was, that the unfortunate little duke de Beaumont wasted gradually away; and, at length, became so attenuated, that his attendants were obliged to nurse him on a pillow. When the duchess was informed of the pitiable condition to which her son was reduced, she instantly repaired to Orleans. Shocked at the spectacle which there greeted her, the duchess bitterly reproached the baillive for her selfish neglect of the child confided to her care. She then took the prince to the castle of Gaillon, in Normandy, where she was sojourning in expectation of her second *accouchement*. The constitution of the little prince, however, had been quite exhausted by the baillive's sudorific treatment. He died, therefore, when little more than one year and a half old, a few weeks before the duchess gave birth to her second child.[1]

The death of this young prince was a great mortification to his grandfather the king of Navarre; and many a fervid expletive did he lavish on the doting old baillive, and her pernicious system of rearing children. The people of Béarn again began to discuss the expediency of their sovereign's union with the daughter of the

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire, p. 100. Vauvilliers. Favyn, liv. 14.

emperor, when Jeanne brought into the world a second son at the castle of Gaillon, during the month of August, 1552.[1] The duke de Vendôme was, at this period, with the royal forces in Picardy; and the projected invasion of the imperial territories of Artois and Hainault, and the consequent unsettled state of the adjacent provinces, was the reason wherefore the duchess Jeanne had retired from her usual abode, the castle of La Fère, to the strong towers of Gaillon.

The new-born prince had the title of count de Marle bestowed upon him; but so apprehensive was the duchess lest some disaster should happen to him, that she insisted upon having the child brought up under her own superintendence. Jeanne's system answered perfectly. In a few months, the infant became a strong and healthy child; and the duchess was able to comply with the earnestly expressed wish of the father, that she would bring the prince, and present him to the Béarnois, during the ensuing festival of Christmas.

On the conclusion of hostilities for the year 1552, the duke de Vendôme and his consort, with the young heir of Navarre, set out for Pau. King Henry, anxious to greet his daughter, "*sa bonne fille*," as he called the princess, met the royal couple at Mont de Marsan. The king contemplated his infant grandson with proud satisfaction, and seemed never weary of fondling the child, and exhibiting him to the admiring gaze of the loyal Béarnois. The duke and duchess de Vendôme soon after their arrival at Mont de Marsan, one

day accompanied the king on a grand hunting expedition, leaving their son in the care of his nurse, and that of the chamberlain, already appointed to attend upon *monsieur le prince*. It happened that, during the afternoon, the nurse carried her young charge to an open window. She was there joined by a gentleman of the chamber to king Henry, who approached and conversed from without.

After some discourse had passed between the pair, the nobleman noticed the young prince, who was sleeping placidly, and requested permission to hold the child. The lady complied. A scene of unseemly jesting then ensued, during which the young prince was several times passed backwards and forwards from the arms of his nurse to those of the cavalier, who sometimes took him, and, at others, only feigned to do so. It so happened, that the window was situated over an outer staircase, leading to the under ground apartments of the castle. For some time, the two continued their careless pastime, when the nurse suddenly relinquishing her grasp of the child, thinking that her companion held him, the young prince fell on the marble steps, and fractured a rib.[1] Terrified at the result of their needless mirth, the pair agreed to conceal the accident. The nurse, whose name is not on record, found means to still the agonized cries of the poor infant; and when the duchess de Vendôme returned home, nothing was said on the subject. During the following few days, the

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire, p. 101. Favyn, Hist. de Navarre, liv. 14.

cries of the suffering child were ascribed to every cause but the right one; and its shrinking from the touch, was attributed to magic, or to some fabulous agency, believed in by the credulous of that age. It was only after the death of the child, which happened some four days from the date of the accident, that the injury was discovered, and then the guilty parties were brought to condign punishment for their misdemeanour.

The wrath of the king of Navarre was excessive at this second disappointment of his hopes; and the accident aroused the latent energy of his nature. He bitterly reproached his daughter for her careless neglect of her children, to which he was pleased to declare the loss of her two hopeful sons might be attributed. He even went so far as to taunt her with the appellations of *marâtre*, and inhuman.[1] He announced to her his firm intention to marry a second time; and bade her attribute to her own heedless neglect of her maternal duties, any eventual loss of her heritage of Navarre, which might ensue from that event. The princess, who could scarcely be considered as responsible for the calamity which bereft her of her child, opposed submission only to her father's anger. At length, Henry suffered himself to be somewhat pacified, on receiving his daughter's solemn promise, that if ever she became likely to bear another child, she would repair to Pau for her *accouchement;* and, after that event, relinquish the management of the infant to his care,

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, p.38. Cayet.

Jeanne pledging her word that she would refrain from opposing any mandate which king Henry might be pleased to issue. The duchess was, moreover, obliged to give the same assurance to the states of the principality;[1] the duke de Vendôme, likewise, expressing his concurrence. After this untoward event, duke Antoine and his consort declined to accompany the king of Navarre to Pau; and the princess Jeanne, and her father, parted in mutual dissatisfaction. The high-spirited Jeanne resented her father's severe strictures, which she thought unjust and unmerited. She felt deeply aggrieved also, at the ascendency which a certain noble lady exercised over the king, and the little court at Pau. It was believed that this lady, who was beautiful, unscrupulous, and distantly allied to the house of Foix, aspired to a matrimonial alliance with Henry, to whom, since the death of queen Marguerite, she had borne a son. The duchess de Vendôme, therefore, had every reason to apprehend that her father, even if he did not proceed to the extremity of demanding the hand of the Spanish infanta, or to that of espousing his mistress, would seek to legitimatize his son, so as to place him next to herself in the succession to the principality, should she die childless. Henry, indeed, had intimated the probability of his adopting such a measure in the heat of his resentment at the loss of his grandsons; because, as the king told his daughter, "as she was not worthy, after her careless disregard, to possess other children, God would surely withhold from her the blessing of posterity."

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, p. 38. Cayet.

In much mental disquietude, therefore, the duke and duchess de Vendôme took up their abode in the castle of La Fleche, in Anjou, the magnificent dower palace of Françoise d'Alençon, the duke's mother. In superintending the architectural embellishments of the edifice, then in the course of construction by the duchess-dowager, Jeanne found some alleviation from sorrow. Like her mother, she was passionately fond of flowers; and the garden at La Fleche afforded her many hours of relaxation, during the absence of duke Antoine, in Picardy. Jeanne again renewed her correspondence with the duchess de Guise, during her sojourn at La Fleche. The character of the duchess was much esteemed by Jeanne, who admired her gentle and womanly deportment, and the undeviating rectitude of her conduct. From the anxiety which the princess always expresses to hear news of her husband, it may be presumed that Jeanne was not satisfied with the amount of intelligence which she was in the habit of receiving from her consort.

THE PRINCESS JEANNE DE NAVARRE TO THE DUCHESS DE GUISE.[1]

Ma Cousine,

I entreat you to send me the news from the camp, by the messenger whom I despatch to you, as I have heard that Coutel is arrived from thence. You will do me an infinite good if you will send me the tidings of what has recently hap-

[1] MS. Bibl. Roy. Béthune, 8746, fol. 19—Inedited. The letter is addressed, "A madame la duchesse de Guise, ma cousine."

pened there, by my messenger, who is to be trusted; also, what you may have heard relative to the return of our husbands. I have been informed that monsieur has quitted Châlons. I pray you write me word all that you know of this matter. If there should be news which you fear may get abroad, assure yourself that I shall as scrupulously guard the secret as any friend that you have. As I know that you are rather idle at writing with your own hand, I shall be content if the letter is written by your secretary, provided that it be of ample length, and comprehensive, stating whether you know anything of the proceedings of *monsieur mon mari*, to whom I have written the enclosed letter, which I beg you will forward to him. Do not deem me importunate if I address myself to you, as to her from whom I have already received many tokens of friendship; so much so, that you may always rely upon me as a personage more at your disposal than any relative, or friend that you possess. I pray God, ma cousine, to give you long life, and to grant your desires.

"Votre bien bonne cousine, et loyalle amie,

"JEHANNE DE NAVARRE.

"P.S. Do me the kindness to prevent any letters that I write to my husband from falling into other hands than his own."

It must have been mortifying to the pride of Jeanne d'Albret, to owe her knowledge of the proceedings of her consort to the wife of the prince whose hand she had so positively rejected. The duke de Guise dominated in the councils of his sovereign; while Antoine de Bourbon appeared there as first prince of the blood, and only in virtue of his rank. Had Jeanne accepted the suit of the duke de Guise, it is impossible to divine

to what power and state the House of Lorraine might have aspired, supported by the royal title and heritage of her ancestors. Brighter days, however, dawned, after a time, for the princess; and early in the spring of the year 1553, Jeanne found herself again likely to realize the hopes of the king of Navarre. With some exultation, the princess despatched a courier to notify the event to her father. Henry received the intelligence with the utmost satisfaction; and sent back a message to remind his daughter of her promise to bring him her child, that it might be reared in Béarn, and not, like her other offspring, "*mollement, et à la Française.*"

During part of the summer of 1553, the duchess de Vendôme shared the discomforts of the camp with her husband; devoted to Antoine, she was his constant companion; and her enlightened mind proved of essential service to him, on more than one occasion during the campaign. "Like a bold and courageous Amazon, this noble princess followed her husband to the camp, to kindle and support the courage of our warriors, as she was well able to do," says a contemporary historian. Instead of repaying the devotion manifested by his wife, with heartfelt homage and affection, Antoine lavished upon the duchess the gallant attentions of a *petit-maître*. There was a reality in all that Jeanne did—a purpose in her actions, which made her shrink from obtrusive and senseless adulation. The heart of Jeanne must have grown sore within her, as she listened to the commendation lavished by all on the suitor whom she had so peremptorily discarded for the

sake of Antoine de Bourbon—the chivalrous duke de Guise, whose deportment elicited homage ever from the foes of the house of Lorraine.

An incident occurred during the sojourn of the duchesse Jeanne at the camp in Picardy, which might again have frustrated her hope of offspring. The duke de Vendôme, with his habitual thoughtlessness, perceiving one day an arquebuse standing in a corner of his tent, took it up, and, without discontinuing his discourse, levelled it at his wife, and pulled the trigger, believing it to be unloaded. To the horror of the spectators, an explosion followed; most providentially, however, the bullet had dropped on the floor, as Antoine raised the gun; and the young duchess stood before them, agitated, but unharmed. Such was the strength of Jeanne's nerves, that she experienced no ill effects from this abominable *escapade*—an act very characteristic of Duke Antoine.[1]

As the period of the princess's delivery drew nigh, the greatest excitement prevailed throughout Béarn. The states of the principality assembled, and having lost faith in Jeanne's ability to fulfil her maternal duties, and doubting whether duke Antoine, of voluble renown, would suffer his consort to undertake the promised journey, they nominated a deputation of members, to request king Henry to adopt measures to satisfy the wishes of his subjects.[2] With the consent of the king, envoys were chosen to proceed to France, to make known the desire of the Béarnois to the duchess; and their

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, p. 374, t. I.

[2] Olhagaray, Hist. de Navarre, p. 507.

expectation that she would punctually fulfil her engagement.

The duchess de Vendôme received this deputation, whilst sojourning at the royal castle of Compiègne, whither her condition had compelled her to retire from the discomforts of a life in the camp. She assured the deputies, that she was ready to comply with their prayer; and she informed them that, before their arrival to renew the petition of the states, she had intended to proceed to Pau for her *accouchement*: an assertion, which, perhaps, Jeanne's loving subjects permitted themselves to doubt, as she had entered the ninth month of her pregnancy, without having made any preparation for a journey into Béarn, in the depth of winter. The duchess, however, perceived that king Henry and his subjects were too much in earnest to admit of any excuse on her part: besides, private information reached her, that her father had recently made his will; in which document his beautiful mistress claimed to have great interest. These causes combined, inspired the duchess Jeanne with courage to undertake so painful an expedition: she accordingly bade adieu to the duke de Vendôme, at Compiègne, on the 15th of November, and set out for Pau, attended by the Béarnois deputies and a numerous suite.

The princess pursued her journey with extraordinary speed, reclining in a litter drawn by mules. She arrived at Pau, on the 4th of December; having spent a fortnight and four days, on the road from Compiègne, in Picardy. The king received his daughter with tender affection, and installed her in the apartments formerly

occupied by her mother, queen Marguerite, on the first story of the castle. Jeanne soon recovered from the fatigue of her journey, and charmed the Béarnois, by frequently showing herself in public. Meantime, she was not unmindful of the proceedings of her father's ambitious mistress, and of the latter's intrigues to bring forward her son. Jeanne often attempted to penetrate the secret of her father's will, much to the amusement of the king, who seemed to take pleasure in increasing her curiosity and anxiety on the subject. One day, the duchess, being alone with her father in his cabinet, made some allusion to the subject which so greatly occupied her thoughts; expressing a desire to be informed what the king's testamentary injunctions were, respecting his son. Henry rose, and opening a coffer, took therefrom a small gold box, having a chain attached to suspend it from the neck, and showing it to the duchess, he said with a smile: "Ma fille, you see this box: well, it shall be your own, with my last will which it contains, provided that, when the pains of labour assail you, you will sing me a Gascon, or a Béarnois song. I do not want a peevish girl, or a drivelling boy!"[1] The duchess laughed; but accepted the proposal. The king, thereupon, placed an old and faithful valet-de-chambre, named Cotin, in the princess's wardrobe-chamber, ordering him to bring instant intelligence of the first symptoms of indisposition felt by his daughter.

Early on the morning of the 13th of December, between the hours of one and two o'clock, the duchess de

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire, p. 104—Edition de 1790.

Vendôme felt that her delivery was at hand. Faithful to her engagement, she ordered that Cotin might be informed of the event, and sent with a summons to king Henry. The king rose in haste, and proceeded to visit his daughter. When Jeanne heard her father's step approach, she commenced, in a firm and clear voice, the Béarnoise *chanson* "Nôtre-Dame, du bout du pont, aidez-moi à cette heure!" This ditty was popular throughout Béarn: the Virgin invoked as "Nôtre-Dame du bout du pont," being a miraculous image, honoured as a Lucina, by the Béarnoise matrons, and whose chapel was built at the extremity of the bridge crossing the river Gave, in the town of Pau. Jeanne, it is recorded, bravely sang on, omitting not one of the numberless verses of the song.[1] She had scarcely made an end, when her son was born—the future hero of Coutras and d'Arques—Henry IV., of illustrious memory,

Ce héros qui regna sur la France
Et par droit de conquête, et par droit de naissance;
Qui par de longs malheurs apprit à gouverner,
Calma les factions, sut vaincre et pardonner!

Transported with joy, king Henry received the newborn babe in his arms, and carefully enveloping the child in the skirt of his robe, he approached the duchess, and placing the gold box in her hand, exclaimed, "There, that is thine own, daughter; but," continued the king, pointing to the infant, "this is mine!" It is stated, however, that Henry mischievously withheld from the duchess the key of the golden box; therefore, though

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire. Favyn, Hist. de Navarre.

she possessed the much-desired document, Jeanne, being still tantalized by her desire to peruse it, felt much disconcerted at the king's method of evading her curiosity. King Henry, meantime, conveyed the babe to his own apartments. The child, it was remarked, did not cry on coming into the world—a circumstance considered one of happy augury. Before the king consigned his grandson to the nurse's care, he performed an ancient ceremony practised by the Béarnois. First, he took a clove of garlic, and gently rubbed the lips of the little prince; next, he presented him with wine in a golden cup. The infant, it is asserted, on smelling the wine, raised his head, and otherwise testified satisfaction. The king then put a few drops of wine on the child's tongue, which he swallowed. "*Va, tu seras un vrai Béarnais!*" exclaimed the old king, with rapture. Taking up the infant in his arms, a second time, king Henry passed into his ante-chamber, which was crowded with gentlemen and courtiers eager to offer him their congratulations. "*Señores!*" said he, holding the child aloft, that all might gaze upon him, "*mira, agora esta oveja parió un leone!*"[1]

The nurse chosen by the prudent old king for his grandson, was not a superannuated lady like the baillive d'Orleans, nor yet a flighty dame, likely to subject her nurseling to the same disaster as befel the unfortunate count de Marle, but a strong and healthy peasant woman, who took the young prince from the castle to her humble abode, to rear him with her own child.

[1] In allusion to the injurious expressions made use of by the Spanish people on the birth of Jeanne d'Albret.

This nurse, however, soon fell sick of a low fever, epidemic then throughout the principality. Eight successive nurses, to whose care Jeanne's royal infant was consigned, sickened of the same disease. The prince was then confided to the care of Jeanne Fourçade, the wife of a poor labourer named Lassansaa, of the hamlet of Bilhères, situated on the river Gave. The park belonging to the castle of Pau, extended along the banks of the river to this hamlet, so that the duchesse de Vendôme could privately visit her son.[1] In the year 1820, the cottage occupied by Jeanne Fourçade, existed almost in the same condition as during the infancy of Henri Quatre. It is described as a poor cottage, standing in a garden of half an acre, surrounded by a mud wall. Over the doorway, the ancient arms of France were blazoned, with the words, "*Sauve-garde du Roy*," such distinction being conceded to Jeanne Fourçade and to her posterity for ever.

The duchess de Vendôme became speedily convalescent. She was recovered sufficiently on twelfth-day of the ensuing year, 1554, to witness the ceremony of the christening of her son in the castle of Pau. The godfathers were the king of France, and the king of Navarre: the godmother was the princess Isabel of Navarre,[2] sister of king Henry, and widow of the viscount de Rohan. The prince was borne to the font by his grandfather, on the shell of a tortoise, which is still treasured at Pau,

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, p. 46.

[2] Isabel, third daughter of Jean d'Albret and Catherine, queen of Navarre. She espoused in 1534, Réné, viscount de Rohan et de Laon, count de Porrhoet.

and shown to travellers, and called the cradle of Henry IV.

During the following month of February, the duchesse Jeanne quitted Béarn, and returned into France. The duke de Vendôme still retained a joint command of the army assembled on the frontier of Picardy, with the constable de Montmorency. Jeanne met the duke at Estrée-au-Pont. After making a brief sojourn there with her husband, she retired to the castle of Baran, near to Brenne, a town situated about four leagues from Soissons.

From this antique abode of the Merovingian kings Jeanne wrote to condole with Madelaine de Savoye, consort of the constable de Montmorency, on the decease of a near relative, whose name the duchess does not state in her letter. Probably, the lady so affectionately mentioned by Jeanne d'Albret, was the countess de Villars, widow of madame de Montmorency's brother, Réné, bastard of Savoy count de Tênde and de Villars, who was killed at the battle of Pavia.

The letter of the duchess de Vendôme is as follows:—

THE DUCHESS DE VENDOME, TO MADAME LA CONNETABLE, DUCHESSE DE MONTMORENCY.[1]

"MA COUSINE,

"I should, indeed, give you cause to doubt the friendship which I bear you, if I failed at this season to address you; not, however, with the intent to propose a better consolation for your grief than that already offered by many

[1] M.S. Bib. Imp., F. de Béthune, No. 8769. Inedited.

worthy personages, but to lament with you the loss of so good a relative and friend. Believe me, ma cousine, that after having experienced the loss of such a mother as I had, I know how to sympathize in this your sorrow. That I may not renew your distress by dwelling on this calamitous loss, I will now supplicate the Sovereign Consoler of the afflicted, to bestow on you all needful solace, and to grant you life as long as she desires who is—

"Votre bien bonne cousine, et parfarte amie,

"JEHANNE DE NAVARRE."

The early letters of Jeanne d'Albret—very few of which are extant—admit us to an insight into her character. Simple and unadorned, they express her sentiments in words concise as possible. The elaborate style, and courtly compliments, in which queen Marguerite d'Angoulême excelled, find no place in her daughter's correspondence. With a boldness of expression which, in those days, found few imitators, Jeanne asserted her opinions, let who might gainsay or oppose them. Her fearless truthfulness rendered her formidable to the courtiers, and hateful to the young queen, whose insincerity Jeanne loved to expose. Like the rest of the court, the duchess held Catherine's talents in little estimation; but disastrous for her was the development of that character trained in the discipline and self-control of the theory embodied by the words—"a prudent prince cannot, and ought not, to keep his word, except when he can do it without injury to himself, or when circumstances under which he contracted the engagement still exist. It is necessary, however, to disguise the appearance of craft, and thoroughly to

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understand the art of feigning and dissembling; for men are generally so simple, and so weak, that he who wishes to deceive, easily finds dupes,"[1]—as taught by the famed *protégé* of Lorenzo de Medici, Machiavelli—sentiments which many princes, when placed in circumstances of peril, unless endowed with extraordinary integrity of character, have more or less acted upon, as well as the astute Catherine.

The duchesse de Vendôme was still sojourning at Baran, when intelligence reached her of the decease of her father, the king of Navarre, which event happened in the town of Hagetmau, May 25th, 1555. Henry was organizing a military expedition, for the invasion of Spanish Navarre, when he fell a victim to the epidemic, which still ravaged certain districts of his dominions.[2] Long after her attendants hailed her queen of Navarre, Jeanne mourned her loss; so intense was her grief, that a presentiment of the future trials and miseries which that fatal title afterwards entailed upon her, might have agitated her mind, and have even shaken, for a season, the fortitude of a spirit so constant and elevated.

[1] Machiavelli, Il Principe, Cap. XVIII.

[2] Olhagaray, Hist. de Navarre et Béarn, p. 108. This quaint historian, when recording the decease of king Henry, relates it in the following words: "Le roy Henry estant à Hagetmau l'an 1555, le 25 de Main, il s'en alla jouyr du repos eternal au parc des bienheureux."

CHAPTER III.

Arrival of Antoine de Bourbon at Baran—Jeanne causes him to be proclaimed king of Navarre—He is summoned to St. Germain—Designs of the French cabinet relative to Béarn—Deportment of the king of Navarre—His reply to the demands proposed to him—Queen Jeanne is compelled to visit the court—Her deportment—Measures which she adopts to defeat the designs of the king of France—Nominates the baron d'Arros military governor of Béarn—Treachery of the chancellor of Navarre—Politic conduct of the baron d'Arros——He defeats the conspiracy to surrender Béarn to the king of France—Arrival of Jeanne and Antoine at Pau—Their enthusiastic reception—Jeanne's reply to king Henry's commissioners—Coronation of the king and queen of Navarre—They issue a new coinage—Antoine favours the Reformation—State of religion throughout France—The court—Correspondence of Jeanne d'Albret with the Viscount de Gourdon—Antoine's imprudent conduct—Letter of remonstrance is addressed to the queen by the cardinal d'Armagnac—The queen assumes the sole administration of affairs—She resolves to visit the court of France—Letter addressed to the sovereigns of Béarn by Henry II.—Jeanne appoints the cardinal d'Armagnac governor of Béarn during her absence—Fêtes given at La Rochelle to the sovereigns—Their arrival in Paris—Antoine releases from the Chatelet a gentleman of the train of the maréchale de St. André—Anger of the king of France—His reception of the sovereigns of Navarre—Regard shown by king Henry for the young prince of Navarre—His future marriage with Marguerite de Valois is proposed—Satisfaction evinced by Antoine and Jeanne at this design—Queen Jeanne an-

nounces the alliance to the sénéchale of Poitou—Power of the house of Guise—Departure of the sovereigns of Navarre, from the Court of France—Birth of the princess Madelaine—Decease of the infant princess—Battle of St. Quentin—The duke de Guise declared lieutenant-general of the kingdom—His conquests—Demands the immediate solemnization of the marriage between the dauphin and Mary Stuart—Opposition of queen Catherine to this project—The marriage is celebrated in the presence of the king and queen of Navarre and the court of France—La Guerre Mouillée—Peace of Cateau Cambresis—League of Peronne—Marriage festivities of madame Claude, with the duke de Lorraine—Birth of the princess Catherine de Bourbon—Correspondence of queen Jeanne with the constable de Montmorency—Return of Jeanne and Antoine to Pau—Death of Henry II. king of France.

WHEN Jeanne had recovered from the first sensations of grief, which she experienced on learning her father's sudden decease, she despatched a courier to the duke de Vendôme, who was with the camp at Estrée-le-Pont, to request Antoine's presence at Baran, and to command those around him to salute her husband as king of Navarre.

The title of king flattered the vanity of the duke de Vendôme in a supreme degree; and while Jeanne was realizing the difficulties which beset her new dignity, Antoine thought only of the appendages and power of patronage appertaining to royal station. The duke, however, complied with his consort's request, and repaired to the château of Baran. His arrival diminished Jeanne's anxieties, for she had received intimation that the king of France intended to profit by the difficulties attending upon her accession to wrest from Antoine various concessions prejudicial to her authority over Béarn. The delusion which possessed Jeanne at the

period of her marriage, relative to duke Antoine's mental qualities, was at an end. Though still fondly attached to her husband, she perceived his want of political sagacity; and she knew that no means were so effectual to win acquiescence from him in any matter as to minister to his ease, or to his luxurious pleasures.

Antoine had been sojourning only a few days at Baran when the missive arrived, so deprecated by the queen of Navarre, to summon her husband to the court at St. Germain. The constable de Montmorency, meanwhile, and the duke de Guise, the active enemies of Antoine de Bourbon, had inspired the king with sinister apprehensions relative to the future career of the sovereigns of Navarre. The wealth of the new sovereigns was declared by them to be excessive. The rich heritage of the house of Albret, augmented by that of Vendôme, seemed to menace even the royal supremacy over the south; while the lands of Béarn, lying contiguous to the Spanish frontier, afforded, they asserted, a dangerous facility for disaffection, on the part of the prince. Henry listened eagerly to these insinuations; for, although the king of Navarre was highly favoured by him, he had never ceased to regret the assent he had yielded to his union with the heiress of Albret. The king, therefore, resolved to compel the sovereigns to cede, to the French crown, the principality of Béarn, and its dependencies, in exchange for territories of equal extent lying in the centre of France.[1]

[1] Olhagaray, Hist. de Navarre, p. 508. De Thore.

Never was there a more arbitrary and unjust demand preferred by the French council; it required, moreover, of Jeanne, the representative of a line of illustrious princes, the cession of her claims to Spanish Navarre; as well as to the Basque portion of her heritage. It wrested from her the possession of the venerable castle of Pau, the abode of her ancestors; and of the duchy of Albret, with its splendid castle, constructed by the English during their tenure of Gascony. This measure was proposed to the king of Navarre by Henry himself, immediately after Antoine's arrival at St. Germain, in obedience to the royal summons. Henry understood the disposition of the prince with whom he had to deal; the royal favour, therefore, seemed boundless in its manifestations towards Antoine, whose vanity was flattered by the distinctions, ostentatiously accorded to his rank. The king then remonstrated with Antoine on the general prevalence of heresy throughout his wife's principalities; assuming, with great astuteness, that the king of Navarre was perfectly orthodox in his own creed, and demanded nothing better than the re-establishment of the ancient faith. He next proceeded to show that the sword alone could restore the religion of Rome to its former dominance in Béarn; and undo the evil which the late queen Marguerite with her proselytizing propensities had inflicted on her subjects. Antoine listened with deferential attention to these observations; he hazarded no objections; on the contrary, the promise of the territories adjacent to his own duchy of Vendôme, in exchange for Béarn, appeared to him to offer a position far from unacceptable. For-

tunately for the honour of the king of Navarre, the thought of his high-hearted and courageous consort interposed to stay him from committing himself by act or promise, in sanction of the extortion meditated by the French court. Antoine was king of Navarre, but by Jeanne's sufferance and consent; he had no power to alienate the principality; nor yet to dispense with one of the ancient prerogatives of the sovereign of Béarn. He, therefore, requested that a brief space might be allowed him for reflection; at the expiration of which period, Antoine returned the following answer:—"That it was out of his power to dispose of the crown of Navarre without the consent of the queen, his consort; he, therefore, humbly prayed his majesty to give him time and opportunity to confer with the said queen on the subject."[1]

King Henry manifested some displeasure at this response. However, the necessity of obtaining the consent of Jeanne, as the preliminary to the intended transfer of Béarn to the crown of France, was so palpable, that the king had no valid objection to urge against Antoine's proposal. In the suite of King Antoine, was the chancellor of Navarre, Nicholas d'Angu, bishop of Mende. This prelate was the bastard son of the famous cardinal-chancellor Duprat. Subtle, enterprising, and unscrupulous, the bishop of Mende, in many points, was the counterpart of Duprat. The falseness and duplicity of the cardinal formed the prominent traits of his son's character. The manœuvres of Duprat, however, with a kingdom for the arena of

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. I. p. 53.

his political intrigues, when imitated by his son, in his dealings with the affairs of a petty principality, assumed an aspect of ignoble scheming, which might have been deemed ludicrous, but for its disastrous results. The enemies of the queen of Navarre, therefore, aware that the ruling influence over this bishop's mind was personal aggrandizement, applied to him to forward their project. The injustice of the cabal to despoil his royal mistress, proved no obstacle to this corrupt prelate: and he secretly promised Henry to use every artifice to procure the assent of all parties concerned in the transfer.

Meanwhile, the queen of Navarre, uneasy at the prolonged absence of her husband at St. Germain, and placing no reliance on his stability of character, journeyed from Baran to the castle of Coucy, from whence she sent to request him to join her, that together they might proceed into Béarn. Antoine eagerly demanded his *congé*; the king assented, but only on the express condition that Jeanne should immediately visit St. Germain; that the matter concerning the cession of the principality might be discussed in her presence. The king of Navarre reposed much trust in his consort's shrewd ability; he, therefore, unhesitatingly gave the promise required of him; especially, as it was plainly intimated, by the constable de Montmorency, that the royal pair would not be permitted to quit the realm without the express sanction of the council.

The indignation of queen Jeanne was boundless, when she heard the details of the scheme devised to despoil her of the territories of her father. The timid

opposition hazarded by Antoine inspired her with contempt; for, rather than yield a town of her heritage, Jeanne would have preferred the most rigorous captivity. This difficult problem was queen Jeanne's first initiation into the cares of royalty; solved, however, she determined it should be to the confusion of her enemies. Distrustful of the bland courtesy of her chancellor's deportment, Jeanne instantly despatched him into Béarn, under pretext of business, much to the regret of the king of Navarre. Without entrusting her design to any ear, she next entered into communication with Bernard, baron d'Arros,[1] one of the twelve barons of Béarn; a man valiant, of elevated mind, and unblemished honour. To him she confided the notable scheme concocted by Henry's council; also, she indicated, at the same time, the measures which she desired him to pursue, in order to defeat the project. D'Arros responded to her appeal with zealous enthusiasm. The baron still remained at Hagetmau, in command of the levies raised by Henri d'Albret, for the invasion of Navarre. In case the baron's right to the military command-in-chief over the principality, bestowed by the deceased king, should be disputed, Jeanne secretly renewed his warrant, in her own name, which d'Arros was instructed to produce only on any extreme emergency.

Queen Jeanne then declared her willingness to pay

[1] The father of Bernard, baron d'Arros, was chamberlain to Henri d'Albret, and shared with the king the perils of his escape from the fortress of Pavia, where Henri was detained a prisoner after the defeat of Francis I. before that city. See Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême, t. I., p. 453.

her respects to Henry at St. Germain. At this juncture, the queen conducted herself with extraordinary prudence. Aware that it was in Henry's power to command her detention in France, until such time as she should agree to his proposition, Jeanne adopted the most serene and submissive deportment, In her first audience of the king, she assured his majesty that if the states of the principality could be induced to sanction his desire, she would personally offer no opposition to the union. She then represented to the king, that as the states of Béarn were renowned for their fidelity to their sovereigns, it would be expedient for her to proceed thither, and absolve them, in person, from their oath of allegiance. The king yielded a reluctant assent to Jeanne's words, the truth of which could not be impeached, even by Henry's eager council. "Ma cousine, there must be but one holding the title of king in France!" was king Henry's often-repeated and emphatic behest.

Permission was, at length, vouchsafed to the queen of Navarre to depart for Pau. She was, however, accompanied by three French commissioners, empowered by Henry to accept, in his name, the cession of Béarn and Lower Navarre; and also to receive the oath of fidelity from the states of the principality. So persuaded was Henry that his attempted usurpation would be crowned with success, that he actually commenced preparations for a journey into Béarn; the project of which was alone confided to the bishop of Mende, in whom the council placed implicit reliance.[1]

[1] Favyn, Hist. de Navarre, liv. 14. De Thou.

The royal pair quickly availed themselves of Henry's permission for their departure, and set out for Pau. The bishop of Mende, meantime, had been industriously intriguing amongst the nobility of the principality—with some success. The expected arrival of the queen, disconcerted his projects: the personage, chief-in-command, over the principality was d'Arros, in virtue of his commission of military governor, granted by the deceased king. To the baron, therefore, d'Angu resolved to apply, being ignorant of the fact, that he had been consulted by the queen. The chivalrous d'Arros had difficulty in repressing his indignation, when the bishop, with some circumlocution, confided to him his treacherous design for the subversion of his royal mistress's authority. He feigned, however, acquiescence in the project, until d'Angu, had revealed the extent of his treasonable league, and had delivered into his hands a list of the principal conspirators. The bishop of Mende, aware of the importance of placing the garrisons of Béarn under the command of officers well-affected towards France, next proposed that d'Arros should quit Hagetmau, under pretext of meeting queen Jeanne on the frontier, taking in his suite, de Vic, governor of Navarreins, an officer devoted to Jeanne's interest. The subtle bishop imagined that d'Arros would fall into the snare, and so afford him the opportunity he thirsted for, of placing himself at the head of the levies raised for the invasion of Spanish Navarre, and with them to seize the strong fortress of Navarreins in the name of the king of France. The baron d'Arros appeared well satisfied with this proposal; d'Angu,

therefore, retired to Lescar to await his opportunity.

D'Arros, now the depository of the secret of his sovereign, and of her rebel subjects, hastened to frustrate the iniquitous designs of the chancellor. Marching at the head of his levies upon Pau, he assembled the states of the principality, and developed the plot in all its bearings. He explained the designs of the French king; and announced the near approach of their own legitimate sovereign. The revelation of their chancellor's connivance in Henry's project, was received with vehement indignation. The people gathered together, and prepared to inflict summary chastisement on the traitorous prelate. His house was burned to the ground, and himself pursued by the infuriated populace to the very confines of the principality, beyond which alone he found safe refuge. The states voted reinforcements to the garrisons of Navarreins, Oléron, Pau, and those in Lower Navarre; and issued the most energetic protest against the annexation of Béarn to the French crown.[1]

In the midst of this tumult, queen Jeanne and her husband made their public entry into Pau. Before Antoine's departure from Paris, the king created him governor of Guyenne, the most influential and important of the governments into which France was divided; and bestowed that of Picardy, vacated by the king of Navarre, upon Antoine's youngest brother,

[1] Olhagaray, Hist. de Navarre, p. 509. Favyn, Hist. de Navarre. Cayet, Chron. Nov. p. 109.

Louis, prince of Condé.[1] Queen Jeanne took up her abode in the castle of Pau, where the young prince of Navarre had been brought from the castle of Coaraze, by his governess Suzanné, baroness de Miossens[2] to meet his royal parents. It was the first time that Antoine looked upon the son, whose rights he had recently so feebly defended. The strength and beauty of her child delighted Jeanne, and with tears of joy, she vowed that nothing should compel her to alienate one of his eventual rights. Whenever the queen appeared in public, her presence was hailed with enthusiasm; crowds of people surrounded the *château* patiently waiting for a glance from their sovereign. Antoine de Bourbon, likewise, obtained a large share of popular ovation; his predilection for reform, insured him the applause of the Lutheran population of Béarn. Instead of accompanying his consort to hear mass daily in the cathedral, Antoine made a parade of his attendance on the Lutheran worship, established in Pau by queen Marguerite. This behaviour occasioned the queen much uneasiness; as in the troubled condition of the principality, it was important to conciliate all classes of her subjects; and especially to avoid exasperating those persons who professed the Romish faith, and

[1] Louis de Bourbon, prince de Condé, duc d'Enghein, son of Charles, duc de Vendome, and Françoise d'Alençon, born May 7th. 1530, and killed at the battle of Jarnac, March 13, 1569. Condé was the younger brother of Antoine, king of Navarre.

[2] Suzanne de Bourbon-Busset, wife of Jean d'Albret, baron de Miossens. This lady sprang from an illegitimate branch of the house of Bourbon, tracing descent from Louis de Bourbon, archbishop of Liege, son of Charles I. duke de Bourbon, and of Agnes of Burgundy.

who, if provoked, might league with king Henry, and encourage the turbulent demonstration which the cardinal d'Armagnac had already thought proper to make at Rome against the sectarian ministers resident in Béarn.

When Jeanne and Antoine took possession of the castle of Pau, they found their new abode rich in works of art; and splendid in decorations. The refined taste of Marguerite d'Angoulême was visible everywhere. Jeanne's presence-chamber was adorned with hangings of crimson satin embroidered by the hand of Marguerite herself. The embroidery represented a passage from the history of the queen's own life. At the four corners of the room, the arms and cyphers of Henry and Marguerite were magnificently wrought in gold. In the picture gallery hung fifty large portraits of eminent personages; there were, moreover, sixty small portraits, twelve medallion portraits, and fifteen landscapes; also, twenty-five wax medallion pictures of kings and princes, arranged together in a glass case. Jeanne's jewel-chamber was stored with precious treasures; cups of agate and crystal studded with gems, reliquaries, jewelled salt-cellars, ewers of silver gilt, vases of rock crystal, and mirrors set in frames adorned with diamonds. Curious rings, and charms, appear in the inventory of the queen's treasures deposited in the castle of Pau. Amongst other articles mentioned, is the celebrated tortoise-shell upon which prince Henry was carried at his baptism. The queen, also, possessed a great variety of ornamental pieces of gold plate, of quaint design, for the adornment of the banquetting board—for in-

stance, one piece is thus described: "*item*, a demoiselle of gold represented riding upon a horse of mother-of-pearl, standing upon a platform of gold, enriched with ten rubies, six turquoises, and three fine pearls." The following description is given of a personal ornament belonging to queen Jeanne: "*item*, a fine rock crystal, set in gold, enriched with three rubies, three emeralds, four pearls, and by a large sapphire, set transparently; the whole suspended from a small gold chain." These valuable effects were treasured in coffers, labelled with the name of a saint, for a distinguishing mark. One coffer was named Ste. Marguerite; another, which contained fifty pieces of plate, brought by the king of Navarre from the castle of La Flèche, was distinguished as St. John.[1]

The commissioners dispatched by the king to receive the abdication of the queen of Navarre, were, meantime, much disconcerted at the adverse turn affairs had taken throughout the principality; and being apprehensive for their own safety, they clamorously demanded a final answer from the queen, and a safe conduct to the frontier of Béarn. Jeanne graciously conceded both these requests: her reply to Henry was moderate and conciliating, though she was aware that the condition of his foreign relations was such, as to prevent him from attempting a military seizure of her dominions. Her answer was to the effect, "that her subjects, far from yielding to persuasion upon the projected transfer of Béarn to

[1] Inventaire général de tous les meubles du château de Pau, pour le roy et royne, &c., fait par messieurs l'Evêques d'Oléron, et de Lescar, et autres. Le—jour de—1561. M.S. Bibl. Imp. F. de Béthune—Inedited.

the crown of France, had been so transported with fury at the simple report of such a project, that it was quite out of her power to control their repugnance. The people had recently risen tumultuously, in defence of their ancient privileges and *fors*, as his majesty's commissioners might testify; and she, therefore, prayed the king to forego his purpose, and to hold her absolved from pressing a matter distasteful to her subjects of every rank."[1]

The recreant chancellor of Navarre, was at the court of France, when the commissioners returned; his malignant representation of the conduct pursued by the queen, highly incensed Henry; but the king's sarcastic and angry reply to Jeanne's notification, produced little effect at the court of Pau. Arros, and her valiant barons of Béarn, applauded the queen's firm resolve to hold her own; and by their advice, she commenced preparations for her coronation. The king, however, proceeded to deprive Antoine of the most important part of the command recently bestowed upon him, by detaching Languedoc from the jurisdiction of the governor of Guyenne; the prince of Condé was likewise dismissed from the command given him in Picardy; and that government was conferred on the admiral de Coligny, nephew of the constable.

The ceremony of the coronation of the king and queen of Navarre was performed in the great hall of the castle of Pau. It was the first time that a sovereign of Béarn had been consecrated within the limits of the principality. The coronation of John d'Albret and his

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. 1. p. 61.

consort, Catherine, heiress of Navarre, was performed with great pomp at Pamplona. Henry and Marguerite never were formally invested with the royal insignia, on account of the sanguinary warfare existing between the emperor and Francis I, and the consequent unsettled condition of the principality from dread of invasion. It was with sorrowful regret, not unmingled with indignation at the usurper of the fairest portion of her heritage, that the mind of Jeanne dwelt upon the traditions of the past coronations of her ancestors in the venerable cathedral of Pamplona, while she prepared for the ceremony of her own consecration. As the place of her coronation corresponded not with her lofty pretensions, as the sovereign of the two Navarres, Jeanne thought proper to dispense with a portion of the ceremonial observed at the inauguration of her predecessors. No royal pageant, therefore, defiled through the ancient capital of the principality; at the hour appointed, the states of Béarn, Bigorre, Foix, Lower Navarre, the chief nobles, the municipalities, and the officers of the various courts, entered the great hall of the castle. Antoine and Jeanne presented themselves to the assembly, and afterwards took their seats in chairs of state, placed under a dais at the upper end of the hall. They were received with acclamations, and with every mark of homage and affection. The oaths were then administered to the sovereigns by the bishop of Lescar.[1] The queen solemnly engaged to maintain the ancient laws, the charters, and the privileges of her subjects lay and

[1] Louis d'Albret, natural son of Jean, king of Navarre, the grand father of Jeanne d'Albret.

ecclesiastical; to maintain her territory intact, and to administer impartial justice to all. The same oath was afterwards taken by the king of Navarre. The remaining portion of the ceremonial was performed by the bishop of Lescar; and Jeanne and her husband were afterwards proclaimed joint sovereigns of Navarre and Béarn.[1]

Some months after her coronation, queen Jeanne issued a gold and silver coinage from the royal mint, established in subterraneous chambers under the castle of Pau. The money was stamped with the effigy of the queen and of her husband; the exergue of the coin bore the legend: "*Antonio et Joanna., D.G. Reg., Nav., D.B.;*" the reverse, the ancient motto of the sovereigns of Béarn: "*Gratiâ Dei sumus id quod sumus.*" To commemorate her coronation, the queen also distributed medals of beautiful design. One side of the medal displayed the arms of Navarre and Béarn, surrounded by the legend: "*No: son: tales: mys: amores:*" the reverse bore the heraldic device of the king of Navarre, with the motto: "*Ad calculos revertere.*"

The reformed ministers, meanwhile, continued to find a safe asylum in Béarn; their principles still held sway over the minds of the majority of Jeanne's subjects. Queen Marguerite's revised missal, and the translation of the Holy Scriptures, made by Briçonnet, bishop of Meaux, a work corrected by Gerard Roussel, bishop of Oléron, under the queen's immediate superintendence,

1 Favyn, Hist. de Navarre, liv. 14. Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. 1. p. 63.

were books treasured as their solace and pride by the Béarnois. The pious bishop of Oléron, Marguerite's friend and chaplain, was no more: and no prelate of equal ability, professing the reformed faith had risen to supply his place. The bishop of Lescar, had little repute or influence in the principality: though he was supposed to be favourably inclined to the "new doctrines," the bishop's age and mental indolence, and his assiduity as a courtier, prevented him from studying the controversy, or from opposing his episcopal veto against the dissemination of reform. In France, edicts had been promulgated against heresy, rigorous enough to satisfy the malevolence of the Sorbonne, and that of the most bigoted upholders of the supremacy of Rome. Decrees, subjecting the Lutherans to capital pains and penalties were issued by the council during the years 1548, 1551, and 1555: the executions throughout France, for heresy, were innumerable—dispersed, and intimidated, the reformers for a time yielded outward acquiescence to the cruel edicts fulminated against them; but in silence, amid adversity and oppression, the principles they professed gained strength, so that the throne hereafter, quailed before their irresistible manifestation. At the court of France, the ancient faith was omnipotent; often at open warfare with the pope, and at times menacing with his armies the territory of the Holy See, king Henry never stayed his persecution of the sectarian teachers and their adherents. The Sorbonne, so turbulent during the reign of Francis I, seemed to relax in its denunciations, content to confide in the zeal of the

cardinal de Lorraine, the self-constituted champion of orthodoxy throughout the realm. It was the court which now had become intolerant; and its orator, the cardinal de Lorraine, played the part enacted by the formidable syndic of the Sorbonne, Noël Beda, during the preceding reign. But even in that court, so pitiless and stern, the persecuted reformers descried sympathy in the deportment of one, whose future countenance ardently hoped for, sufficed to inspire them with present resignation. The young queen, Catherine de Medici, received with marked favour those leaders of the reformed party, whose rank entitled them to appear at court. It was known that the queen had dared to plead for the modification of some of the most rigorous edicts; that she constantly cited the conduct of the deceased queen of Navarre, and spoke of Marguerite as a princess, whose deportment was worthy of all imitation. The character of the queen at that early period was little understood. The people pitied her as a forsaken wife, domineered over daily by madame de Valentinois. She was supposed to have little influence in the state; and yet, by some means as surprising to Henry's ministers as the obstacle often proved unexpected, Catherine showed herself indirectly a formidable opponent to many of their projects. The queen never, in any circumstance, abated her submissive protestations; or voluntarily offended any one; she was never elated—never dejected. Above all, she avoided that shoal upon which so many princes make shipwreck—she never took a favourite. In fact, the protection of the reformed party, which numbered many great and influential nobles, was, at this period, Catherine's only

road to power. The court was divided into two factions—the one, headed by the Guises, and the duchess de Valentinois, was in possession of power, in favour with the king, and had constituted itself the sole controller of public affairs, and the castigator of heresy. The other party followed the constable de Montmorency, his nephews of the house of Châtillon, chiefs of the reformed party, and the Bourbon princes. The power of the princes of Lorraine had long given umbrage to Montmorency: he, the veteran constable, beheld his honours pale before the suavity of the great duke, and the energy of the cardinal. An intimate alliance with the princes of the blood, Montmorency, therefore, felt to be needful, for the maintenance of his credit at court. His reconciliation was effected with the king and queen of Navarre, and the other princes, through the good offices of the constable's great-niece, the fair and gentle Eleanor de Roye,[1] princess of Condé. Catherine quickly read the secret of this new alliance; she remembered the axiom of her ancestors of the house of Medici, by the which they had subjugated Florentine faction. "*Il faut diviser pour regner.*" Aloof from the great dominant parties, Catherine was a mere cipher in the court; allied

[1] Eleanor was the daughter of Charles, sieur de Roye, and Madeleine de Mailly, daughter of the baron de Conty, by Louise de Montmorency, sister of the Constable. Eleanor was born at the castle of Chastillon-sur-Loire, on the eve of St. Matthew's Day, 1535. She received the name of her godmother Eleanor, second queen of Francis I. Her other sponsors were Marguerite d'Angoulême, queen of Navarre, the dauphin Francis, and the bishop of Beziers, Eleanor's great-uncle. She was married to the prince de Condé at Plessier de Roye, June 22nd. 1551, in the presence of all the members of the house of Vendôme.

to the cause of the princes, she might hope successfully to balance the authority of Diane de Poitiers and the Guises. The queen, therefore, perceiving her advantage, accepted it with her usual prompt address.

The king of Navarre, meanwhile, emboldened by his alliance with Montmorency, proceeded with so little caution in the favour which he was then pleased to lavish on reform, as to kindle great discontent amongst the Roman Catholic portion of his subjects of Béarn. The queen remained steadfast in her outward adherence to the Romish communion, and she often gravely remonstrated with Antoine on the peril to which he was so heedlessly exposing her heritage.

There remains no doubt, however, that Jeanne fully participated in her husband's religious sympathies, though she manifested greater prudence in demonstrating her sentiments. The example of her admirable mother was, doubtless, ever present, stimulating the queen to examine the doctrines so keenly contested. Jeanne's adoption of the principles of reform, seems to have been a gradual process; and no one can be specially indicated as having influenced her mind thereto. With the duchess of Ferrara she maintained, indeed, a constant and confidential correspondence; for the daughter of Louis XII. found congenial sympathy with Jeanne's spirit. Amongst many other great barons of the south, who had espoused the tenets of Calvin, was the viscount de Gourdon. His character and military repute seem to have recommended him to the favour of the queen of Navarre, who honoured him with much friendship and confidence. Beyond this fact, and the

detail of a few valiant exploits, history is silent on the career of de Gourdon. Jeanne appears to have confided many of her perplexities to the viscount. Some of the letters which she wrote to him remain amongst the most curious and interesting records of her life, while they alone detail her early resolves on religious matters. Hoping to profit by the advice and experience of de Gourdon, Jeanne, about this period, invited him to confer with her secretly, at the castle of Odos, in Bigorre. Her letter was written a few weeks after her arrival at Pau; and, as it contains a revelation of her most secret sentiments, mingled with many other curious details, the epistle merits to find a place in the history of the queen's life.

JEANNE, QUEEN OF NAVARRE, TO THE VISCOUNT DE GOURDON.[1]

Monsieur le Viscomte,

I write to inform you, that up to the present time, I have followed in the path indicated by the deceased queen, madame my most honoured mother, (whom may God absolve,) relative to my choice between the two religions; nevertheless, the said queen, being persuaded by her brother, monseigneur king Francis I. of happy and glorious memory, my most revered uncle, not to puzzle her brains with new dogmas, after a time seemed to care only for humorous and witty romances. Moreover, well do I remember, that long previously, the king, monsieur my most honoured father and lord, hearing that the said queen was engaged in prayer in her own apartments, with the ministers Roussel and Farel, entered and dealt her a blow on the right cheek—the ministers

[1] Bibl. Roy. M.S. de Vallant—Portef. 1er. p. 290—Inedited.

having contrived to escape in great perturbation—while he soundly chastised me with a rod, forbidding me to concern myself with matters of doctrine; the which treatment cost me many bitter tears, and held me in dread until his decease. At the present moment, however, free by the demise of the said monseigneur my father, two months ago, and incited by the example, and the exhortations of my cousin, the duchess of Ferrara, it appears to me that reform is as reasonable, as it seems necessary; so much so, that I deem it disloyal cowardice towards God, towards my conscience, and towards my people, to halt longer in suspense and perplexity. Inasmuch as the long disputes and altercations between monseigneur, king Henry of France, and the pope, resulted three years ago in the publication of an edict of great severity against the said reform, it seems needful to me that all worthy people should confer together, to meet such present and future danger. Having, therefore, been duly apprized that you have about you certain reverend personages, and that in yourself are united wit, nobility and courage, if you will with them repair to the castle of Odos in Bigorre, I for my part, will not fail to give you the meeting there, towards the end of the ensuing month of September. Hoping there to meet you, I pray God, monsieur le viscomte, to have you in His holy keeping. Written at Pau, this 22nd day of August, 1556.

"Votre bien bonne et asseurée amye,

"JEHANNE, ROYNE."

* Jeanne's reminiscences of her early days are amusing enough; and the earnestness with which she alludes to her father's anger, confirms the opinion that King Henry had obtained great ascendancy over the mind of his daughter. It is nowhere on record whether Jeanne journeyed to Odos to meet the viscount de Gourdon as she proposed; the probabilities, however, are in the

negative, as Antoine's incautious conduct gave great umbrage to his Roman Catholic subjects, and to augment such disapprobation, would have been totally at variance with the tenour of the queen's policy at this period.

The king, nevertheless, in defiance of his consort's example, persisted in his imprudent acts; and not content with according favour to the reformed ministers, he exclusively bestowed his patronage on their adherents. One of the most conspicuous of these ministers was David, a man of fierce zeal, who had rendered himself bitterly obnoxious to the Romish party, by the virulence of his aspersions. David's orations made great impression upon Antoine; for stout words and resolute manner, generally take effect upon a wavering and unstable nature. The king, therefore, took the minister, David, under his special protection; he nominated him his chaplain in ordinary, and bestowed upon him the title of "Prédicateur du roi, et de la royne de Navarre."[1] At the suggestion of his chaplain, the king sent a messenger to Geneva, to invite thence a celebrated minister named Boisnormand, to whom he promised great favours, provided he established himself in Béarn; in short, Antoine, with the tenacity of feeble intellect, blindly pursued the policy which won him popular applause on his first arrival at Pau, without thought of its suitableness to the present circumstances of his consort, and her dominions.

During the first few months after her arrival at Pau, the queen of Navarre seldom took a prominent part in

[1] Brantôme, Eloge d'Antoine de Bourbon, roy de Navarre.

the affairs of the principality; her time was devoted to her son, and in superintending the orderly conduct of the royal household, which, upon her accession, Jeanne found in a condition of lax discipline. Probably had Antoine de Bourbon displayed regnal talents, even of ordinary description, Jeanne d'Albret would never have been handed down to posterity as one of the heroines of history. The murmurs of her people, the coldness with which many of the nobles, faithful to their allegiance to Rome, regarded Antoine, added to her own disapproval of his caprice, at length roused the serious attention of the queen, and drew her from her retirement. From Rome, the threatening manifestations of displeasure with which pope Paul IV. viewed the conduct of Antoine, alarmed the queen. The cardinal d'Armagnac,[1] the prelate, who, as archbishop of Toulouse, exercised the authority of metropolitan over Béarn and its dependencies, was then resident in Rome, and addressed from thence a letter of stern remonstrance. He represented the anger of the supreme pontiff, at innovations not even publicly sanctioned by the late sovereigns, Henry and Marguerite; and finally, he admonished the queen, that unless these unseemly proceedings were checked, the pontifical censures, withheld then only at his intercession, would assuredly be hurled upon the principality.

The reception of this letter was the occasion which

[1] George d'Armagnac, cardinal-archbishop of Toulouse. He was created cardinal by Paul III. December 19th, 1544. The cardinal d'Armagnac was the son of Pierre, Bastard d'Armagnac, count de l'Isle en Jourdain, by Yolande de la Haye, dame de Passavant. He died June 5th, 1585, aged 84.

Jeanne chose for asserting her sovereign prerogatives. The queen understood that the menaces of cardinal d'Armagnac were not to be disregarded with impunity; she was aware of the power which that courtly and subtle prelate possessed at Rome; and of the unscrupulous use he made of it to put down heresy. The cardinal had been one of the first prelates who had dared protest against the protection accorded to reform by queen Marguerite. During the reign of Francis I., when to censure his sister was regarded by the king as an offence of deepest dye, the cardinal d'Armagnac had not feared to lay a formal complaint of her proceedings in Béarn before the privy council and the Parliament of Paris. The avidity manifested by Henry II. to annex the domains of Albret to his crown, was not forgotten by queen Jeanne. It was in consequence, also, of a papal interdict, that Upper Navarre—the brightest jewel in the diadem of her ancestors—had been wrested from them by the Hapsburg. Jeanne felt that a temporizing policy might result in her dethronement, bounded as were her territories, by the dominions of France and Spain—the sovereigns of both these countries being equally covetous for possession of her principality and its dependencies. The queen, therefore, summoned to her council the barons d'Arros and d'Audaux, and the count de Grammont.[1] Their first

[1] Antoine d'Aure, eldest son of Claire, heiress of Grammont, and of the viscount d'Aster. Antoine assumed the name and arms of Grammont. This great noble was one of the most faithful partizans of Jeanne d'Albret, who elevated him to the highest offices in Béarn. He died, A.D. 1576.

measure was to issue letters patent, addressed to the bishop of Lescar, directing him to admonish all priests holding benefices in his diocese to reside on their cures; and authorizing him, after this intimation had been thrice given, to remove all ecclesiastics, who should prove contumacious. The queen next signed an edict forbidding any to preach in public, without having first obtained a licence from the bishop of Lescar. David, Boisnormand, and other reformed ministers, loudly protested against this prohibition; and petitioned the king of Navarre to procure its revocation. Antoine felt highly displeased at his consort's independent act; but Jeanne met his angry remonstrances with a firmness, very discouraging to his design of compelling her to repeal the obnoxious limitation. "If it be your pleasure, monseigneur, to lose your own domains by confiscation as a penalty for your intemperate zeal, I have nothing to observe thereon. As for myself, it is not my intention thus to hazard the little remnant that remains to me of the territories of the kings, my predecessors!"[1] was the stern response that Antoine's importunity, at length, drew from his consort.

King Antoine himself was soon compelled to acknowledge the wisdom of Jeanne's decisions; the imprudence of his conduct had so irritated Paul IV., that the pope addressed remonstrances on the subject to the king of France, admonishing him to check betimes the heretic zeal displayed by the chief of the house of Bourbon. Henry had not forgotten the grudge he owed Jeanne, for the tact with which she had frustrated

[1] Brantome, Eloge d'Antoine de Bourbon.

his views on Béarn; he, therefore, dictated a severe reprimand to the king of Navarre, a document signed by a majority of the cabinet, in which the king declared it to be his royal intent to despatch an army, under the duke de Guise, to take possession of the principality, unless the king and queen of Navarre interdicted, by proclamation, the ministrations of the reformed teachers, and dismissed Boisnormand, David, and other sectarian preachers from their territories.[1] To render his menace the more effective, the king commenced preparations for the despatch of an army to the south; his lieutenants in Languedoc received instructions to gather towards the frontiers of Béarn the forces under their command. The danger seemed imminent; while the intrigues of the French party daily grew more formidable; so that Jeanne found herself compelled to adopt decisive measures for averting the calamities impending. She determined, in the first instance, to visit the court, and to confer personally with king Henry. To render her conference productive of the good she desired, she proceeded, before her departure, to effect important reforms in the government. The obnoxious Calvinist minister, Boisnormand, received the queen's order to retire from Pau; an *ordonnance* was published prohibiting persons to assemble in the streets for the purposes of public worship; the edicts in force during the reign of Henry and Marguerite were revived, to the great joy of the Béarnois. The numerous ministers patronized by the king, and attached to the court, were dismissed, and forbidden to preach in public,

[1] Olhagaray, Hist. de Béarn et Navarre, p. 517.

excepting the minister David, who was duly licensed for the office by the bishop of Lescar. The bishops of Oléron and Lescar, moreover, received letters patent, signed by the queen's hand, empowering them to suppress religious tumults, and to punish their promoters. The crowning concession which Jeanne d'Albret made to the exigencies of her position, was to recall the cardinal d'Armagnac from Rome, and to constitute him her lieutenant throughout Béarn, and its dependencies, during her absence at the court of France.[1] Antoine submitted with very bad grace to these proceedings; but as the queen and her council declared the measures imperative, he was compelled to acquiesce. From thenceforth, however, Jeanne d'Albret assumed her regal sceptre, which she never more delegated to the hands of her husband; on her accession, she had suffered him to rule supreme over her councils; but having made experience of his incapacity, the queen trusted him no more with the sole conduct of her affairs.

The king and queen of Navarre quitted Pau about the middle of March, of the year 1557, accompanied by the young prince of Béarn, and his governess, madame de Miossens. Proud of her son, Jeanne d'Albret wished to show him to her royal kinsman, the king of France; and to ask favour for the grandson of Marguerite d'Angoulême, from the son of Francis I. In order that their journey to the court might not be regarded as a compulsory measure, the royal pair made a progress through the different towns of Antoine's government of Guyenne. They were entertained with

[1] Olhagaray, Favyn. Vauvilliers.

great splendour at Bordeaux and at La Rochelle. At this latter place, amongst other *fêtes*, provided by the municipal council, was a theatrical performance. With much want of consideration, for the sentiments and position of the sovereigns, the piece performed contained the most satirical and offensive allusions to the Romish faith, and a complete travesty of the ceremonies of the church.[1] The brave Rochellois concluded that the daughter of Marguerite d'Angoulême could not, in her heart, be inimical to the faith of the reformed; and the *éclat* of Antoine's late proceedings in Béarn, gave undeniable proof, that to him such an exhibition must be acceptable. The queen sat throughout the performance, without testifying applause whatever; and retired to her lodgings with so grave a demeanour, that the authorities remained in doubt, whether their farce had not grievously offended their royal guests. From this suspense, however, they were speedily relieved by the king of Navarre, as far as he was himself concerned, who highly commended the performance; and, as a mark of approbation, he took all the comedians under his special patronage, and moreover, presented each with a considerable gratuity.[2] Antoine, when he committed this egregious blunder, was attended by the chancellor of Navarre, Bouchard,[3] and by Descars, his first chamberlain, and one of Jeanne's privy councillors. These personages, it was subsequently discovered, were secret

[1] Bayle, Dictionnaire Historique. *Article* Navarre.

[2] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. i. p. 82.

[3] Aymery Bouchard, succeeded the traitor bishop of Mende, as chancellor of Navarre.

partisans of the Guises, whose steadfast purpose it was, first to humble, and then to destroy the Bourbon princes; that no party in the state might prove strong enough to balance their own authority. The want of politic tact, so glaringly displayed in the conduct of the king of Navarre, must have been galling beyond measure to Jeanne d'Albret; and not all the brilliant wit, and the many personal and social qualities which Antoine possessed, could compensate, Jeanne felt when too late, for the absence of that conduct and discretion in which her husband was so deficient. On a survey of the history of these momentous times, the rapid rise of the House of Lorraine to power, and the consequent depression of the princes of Bourbon, seems less the result of the unscrupulous ambition of the former, than the natural course of events, which show that the stronger intellects, united with the faculty of consistent command, must always maintain ascendency over mere rank, however supreme. Antoine's weakness of character rendered him the tool of his party. Trusted by no one, he was sought for the splendour of his name; and feared in proportion as his capricious defection might entail evils which his personal *prestige*, apart from his rank, would have led none to dread.

From La Rochelle, the king and queen of Navarre journeyed to Paris, and from thence to Amiens, where the French court was sojourning. While in the capital, Antoine's luckless destiny involved him in another affair, which, as it trenched upon the prerogatives of the king of France, might have had a disastrous termination, and have totally defeated the pacific intent upon

which Jeanne visited the court. It happened that the maréchale de St. André had a favourite retainer, the sieur de la Rochechampdieu, confined in the diocesan prison of the Châtelet, on a charge of heresy. The maréchale, upon Antoine's arrival, applied to him, to procure the liberation of her gentleman usher. The king of Navarre readily promised his assistance, without reflecting that such an act was injudicious, especially when the stigma of heresy was attached to his own name, and had involved him in much present trouble. The cardinal de Bourbon,[1] being governor of Paris, Antoine had little difficulty in procuring the release of the maréchale's retainer. Fortunately, however, in the first instance, he prudently applied for the sanction of the law officers of the crown, who, whatever might be their opinion of the culprit's guilt, thinking it too insignificant a question upon which to incur the displeasure of the first prince of the blood, responded as Antoine desired. The whole affair, however, was represented to Henry in a different light; and the previous displeasure he entertained against the king and queen of Navarre, was greatly augmented by this officious interference on the part of king Antoine. On their arrival at Amiens, Jeanne and Antoine proceeded, without delay, to pay their respects to the king. Henry received them with the utmost sternness of countenance; and his greeting was so cold, that Jeanne felt that her conciliatory overtures had been politic and necessary. The king then addressed Antoine, and

[1] Charles de Bourbon, cardinal-archbishop of Rouen, brother of Antoine de Bourbon, and of Louis, prince de Condé.

haughtily exclaimed, "How, monseigneur! have I not before told you, that there is, and shall be, but one king in France?" "Sire,"[2] replied Antoine, with that courtly suppleness which extricated him from so many difficulties; "before your gracious majesty, my sun is in eclipse; and in this kingdom, I am but your subject and servant." "Why, then, did you presume to open my prisons with royal authority? what has induced you to do that?" resumed the king. "Sire," responded Antoine, "it was at the entreaty of madame la maréchale de St. André,[1] that I interfered to deliver, a gentleman, her retainer, by and with the advice and consent of your own officers and judges—a fact, which I will maintain against any one. The cavalier, sire, moreover, had not been proved guilty of the crime charged against him." The marshal de St. André being one of the king's favourites, Henry was unwilling to investigate further into an affair, which probably might implicate madame la maréchale; although the latter, despite of her enormous wealth, did not enjoy much consideration at court, and lived on bad terms with her husband. "The affair has been represented to me differently," replied Henry, in more conciliatory tones; "nevertheless, I am willing to overlook it. You will do well, monseigneur, however, in future, to remember the rank you hold in France."[2]

[1] Marguerite de Lustrac, consort of Jacques d'Albon, maréchal de St. André, marquis de Fronsac. This lady was renowned for her extravagant luxury and ambition. So improvident was she, that though a great heiress, and thrice married to nobles of the highest rank, she died in the utmost penury in Paris, about the year 1580.

[2] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire, p. 111.

As king Henry uttered these words, the little prince of Navarre ran into the room, and took hold of his father's hand, the patience of the child being exhausted by waiting so long in the royal ante-chamber. It proved a fortunate diversion for king Antoine. The beautiful boy, with his innocent and merry smile, made Henry forget his wrath. Calling the little prince to his side, the king placed him on his knee, embraced him, and paid queen Jeanne many commendations on her son's beauty of countenance, and artless manner.

"Will you be my little son?" asked Henry, caressingly, after talking for some time with the child, in delight at the acuteness of his replies.

"*Ed que es lo pay*," responded the young Henri de Navarre, in the dialect of Béarn, fixing his eyes on his father.

"Well then, will you not like to become my son-in-law?"[1] rejoined the king.

"Oui bien, sire!" answered the child, gravely.

From thenceforth, it is asserted, that an alliance was contemplated between Henri de Navarre, and the king's youngest daughter, the celebrated Marguerite de Valois, who, at this period, had entered her fourth year. The project of this alliance, appears to have afforded equal satisfaction to Jeanne and her royal consort. The honour conferred on the young prince was great, for to have been selected as the future husband of madame Marguerite, gave the prince virtual adoption into the royal family, with the vest privileges appertaining to the rank of *un fils de France*. King Antoine wrote forthwith to

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire, p. 112.

his sister, the duchesse de Nevers,[1] that this alliance "was the thing in the world that he desired most to obtain, and which from thenceforth placed both his repose and prosperity upon a secure basis."

The queen also addressed a letter, during her sojourn at the court of France, to the sénéchale of Poitou, her mother's old and devoted servant, who was then confined to her house by sickness, in which she expressed herself, concerning the proposed alliance, in the following words: "Ma grande amie: To cheer and console you in your sickness, I send you the news which I have heard from the king, my husband, that he having taken courage, boldly and finally, to ask the king to bestow madame, his young daughter upon my son, his majesty has been pleased to grant us this favour, for the which I will not attempt to conceal the gladness and content I feel."[2] When Jeanne wrote thus to the sénéchale of Poitou, she was at St. Germain, with queen Catherine. In after years, amidst the anguish which attended the negotiations for this alliance, here so exultingly alluded to, mournful must have been Jeanne's smile, if she recalled her heedless words, and surveyed the abhorrence with which she then regarded the project.

Queen Jeanne, meantime, made politic use of her sojourn at the court of France. With extreme apprehension, she beheld the power of the duke of Guise and his brothers dominant everywhere. Montmorency,

[1] Marguerite de Bourbon, second daughter of Charles, duke de Vendome and Françoise d'Alençon. She married the duke de Nevers in 1538. Her beauty and wit are highly extolled, and she was an especial favourite with Francis I.

[2] Brantome, Dames Illustres.—Vie de Marguerite de France.

and the princes of the house of Bourbon, were alike compelled to yield them pre-eminence. The consummate tact of the cardinal de Lorraine, combined with his unprincipled daring, swept away every obstacle which might have arrested the more disciplined ambition of the duke de Guise. Closely connected with the house of Bourbon,[1] there seemed no barrier even before the throne itself, to interdict its ascent to the princes of Guise. Their alliances had been contracted with politic dexterity; all tending to the one supreme point—their elevation to uncontrolled dominion over the councils of the sovereign. The alliance of the duke d'Aumale, with the daughter of madame de Valentinois was negotiated in this view; the queen alone, impracticable, and dexterous as themselves, afforded them unmitigated solicitude. Catherine was ambitious; but by the betrothal of their niece, Mary Stuart to the dauphin, they trusted to extort from her that support which they had ceased to expect from her favour. The duke de Lorraine, the youthful chieftain of their house, was pursuing his education in France under the auspices of the duke de Guise; the intense aversion shown by the duchess Christine, his mother, to an alliance with France, had not diverted her ambitious kinsmen from their purpose, which finally issued in the betrothal of the young duke to Claude de France, second daughter of the king. Their wealth, their alliances, and

[1] The mother of the duke de Guise and his brothers, was Antoinette de Bourbon, sister of Charles, duke de Vendome. The duchess-dowager de Guise was, therefore, the aunt of the king of Navarre. Rénée, sister of the constable le Bourbon, espoused Antoine le Bon, duke de Lorraine, elder brother of Claude, first duke de Guise, the husband of Antoinette de Bourbon.

above all, their undoubted talents, which gained the princes of Lorraine enviable repute, encircled them, and constituted a barrier, insurmountable to such puny assailants as the princes of the blood royal.

At the period when Jeanne arrived at court, the intrigues of the cardinal de Lorraine had procured the subversion of the treaty of Vaucelles, the last political act of importance executed by the emperor Charles V., previous to his departure for the delicious retirement of Yuste. Before the queen quitted the court, the duke de Guise, at the head of a numerous army, was on the point of proceeding to Italy, armed with almost regal powers of command, and with unlimited privilege of negotiation. The renewal of the war was universally mourned by the French, who cared little for the intrigues of the unprincipled nephews of Paul IV, the cardinal Caraffa and his brothers; or the contest in which that imperious pontiff was involved with Spain. The nation manifested even less interest in the revival of the antiquated pretensions of the crown of France upon the kingdom of Naples, to wrest which from the Spaniards was the ostensible errand of the duke in Italy. To the Guises alone, peace was unwelcome. The battle-field was the arena upon which the chivalrous duke could alone hope to win the renown he coveted. The fiery oratory, and insidious argument of the cardinal de Lorraine, on the other hand, were never heard to greater advantage than when he developed before the council his schemes of daring aggression. The Guises had learned, moreover, that peace invariably lowered them in the scale of political eminence; for

king Henry, the creature of habit, defered often, in matters of internal policy, to the advice of Montmorency, with whom it was notorious that they never agreed. The exquisite address of the cardinal de Lorraine, nevertheless, was seldom disconcerted. The Guises boldly placed themselves at the head of the religious movement and reaction, which ensued on the decease of Francis I. The faith of Rome, during that reign, though dominant in the state, had suffered great eclipse. On the accession of Henry II., "the sectarian heresy," was proscribed by edict. The princes of Lorraine, therefore, assumed to themselves the offices of champions of the faith, and the promoters of orthodoxy throughout the realm. Although the veteran constable had never given symptoms of defection from the creed of Rome, the cardinal de Lorraine skilfully contrived to throw doubt on the sincerity of his profession, by artful allusions to the avowed heresy of the Châtillons, Montmorency's favoured nephews. At this period, though, Jeanne d'Albret had nothing to dread from the religious animosity of the princes of Lorraine, as she herself had, at this time, committed no overt act of disloyalty to the ancient faith; yet what evils might not she then descry from the future conflux of such characters as the dauphin Francis, the queen Catherine, the Guises, Antoine de Bourbon, the princes of Bourbon, and the stern Montmorency!

As no military command had been assigned to the king of Navarre in the expedition under the duke de Guise to recover the diadem of Naples, Jeanne, wearied of seeing her husband a mere cypher at court,

determined to return to Pau. The queen, moreover, was within a few weeks of her *accouchement*, which event she desired should happen in Béarn. Henry made no opposition to the departure of the royal pair; except he desired that Jeanne would leave her son to be educated at the court of France with madame Marguerite. This proposition was firmly declined by the queen; but, as Henry did not persist in his demand, probably influenced by Catherine de Medici, who had more ambitious views for her daughter, Jeanne was finally suffered to depart with her son.[1]

Soon after the arrival at Pau, the queen gave birth to a daughter. The young princess received the name of Madelaine, an appellation endeared to the Béarnois from the grateful reminiscences which they entertained of Madelaine, sister of Louis XI. of France, mother of Gaston Phœbus, king of Navarre, who, for some years governed the principality for her son. The infant princess, however, only survived a fortnight. Her royal mother had scarcely leisure to deplore the loss of her child, when the intelligence of the defeat at St. Quentin,[2] filled the sovereigns of Navarre with dismay. The brilliant victory gained by the armies of Spain, under the command of the young Duke of Savoy reduced France to the verge of ruin. Had Philip's victorious army marched upon Paris, the surrender of the capital was inevitable. The constable remained a prisoner in the hands of the

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. 1. p. 84. Cayet, Chron. Novenaire.

[2] The battle of St. Quentin was fought August 10th, 1557, on St. Lawrence's Day.

Spaniards; and the fatal field of Pavia itself displayed not a more indiscriminate slaughter of the noblest aristocracy of France. In Italy, the successes of the duke de Guise had been checked by Alba, and by the treason of the pope's perfidious nephews; and probably the military renown of the duke was saved some diminution by the command which was forwarded to him from the privy council to return and undertake the defence of his own country.[1]

The duke was received on his landing with rapturous welcome. Never before had the popularity of the Guises so obscured the *prestige* of the princes of the blood. It was even proposed to confer upon him the title of viceroy of France; letters patent, however, were issued by Henry nominating the duke "*lieutenant des armées du roi, dedans et dehors le royaume*," with powers which for the time superseded the authority of the king himself.[2] On perusing this edict, conveying the most comprehensive authority ever entrusted by sovereign to his subject, the helplessness of king Henry in abdicating the prerogatives of his crown, though but for an interval, is more to be wondered at, than that the great duke, intoxicated by his brief experience of supreme power, and sated with adulation, should afterwards somewhat forget the pliant bearing of the courtier.

The valiant exploits of the duke, however, seemed to justify his elevation; in less than a fortnight from the

[1] Lettre de Henri II. au duc de Guise, dated September 1st. 1557. Lettres et Mémoires d'état de Ribier, t. II. p. 700.

[2] Mezeray, Abbrég. Chron. Vie de Henri II. Mém. de Rabutin, l. 9ème. Mém. de Montluc.

period of his nomination to supreme command, the Spanish army no longer menaced the frontier; the towns of Calais, Guisnes, and Ham, were conquered from the English, and the fortresses of the two last places razed to the ground. Finally, the security of France was insured by the capture of Thionville. When the duchess de Guise appeared in public, she was saluted with acclamations; and the cry of "*vive la petite fille du bon roi Louis!*" echoed through the streets of Paris, even in the hearing of the sovereign himself. The guerdon which the duke de Guise demanded for his exploits was the immediate union of the dauphin with Mary Stuart. Queen Jeanne and Antoine de Bourbon immediately resolved on a journey to Paris to witness the royal nuptials; and, if possible, to balance by their presence the overwhelming power of the Guises. The junction of the princes of Bourbon, and their union, during the captivity of Montmorency could alone maintain the semblance of power for their party.

Jeanne was welcomed by Catherine de Medici, to whom the project of her son's marriage with the niece of Guise was hateful beyond measure. From his prison in Ghent, the Constable wrote to implore his master to pause ere he permitted his ambitious subjects to place a princess of their own blood on the throne of France. It is more than probable, that had not the peculiar position of affairs placed the Guises at the head of the government, the fair brow of the queen of Scotland would never have been circled by the crown matrimonial of France, as the bride of Henry's eldest son. The constable, and his faction, wished that Mary

should espouse the duke of Orleans, afterwards Charles IX. This design received the sanction of Jeanne d'Albret; and earnestly did she employ her influence with king Henry to accomplish that alliance. In vain the Guises tried to propitiate Catherine; the queen absolutely refused her consent, on the plea that the dauphin's health remained as yet too infirm to permit him to marry. "I will not, therefore, ask the king to do a thing which I cannot approve. Is not the king the guardian of both parties? The queen of Scots is not likely to be removed from the kingdom; then, wherefore, I pray you, should I seek to hurry a marriage which may be accomplished at any time, while the health of monsieur le dauphin, my son, remains in so precarious a condition?" The sovereign, who permits his subject to assume undue ascendency, personal, or political, is certain some day to be made sensible of his error. Henry, when immediate danger of invasion was averted from his realm, discovered that he had become a mere puppet in the hands of his new ministers. The tone of courtly arrogance assumed by the conqueror of Calais, imposed as much upon the sovereign, as the dictatorial *hauteur* of the cardinal de Lorraine curbed freedom of deliberation at the privy-council board. "I have been constrained to create the duke de Guise my lieutenant-general," wrote Henry to the imprisoned constable de Montmorency; "also affairs have now compelled me to conclude the marriage of monsieur le dauphin with the niece of the said duke, and likewise to do many other things. Time, however, *m'en fera la raison.*"[1] The ominous conclusion to the

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. I. p. 89.

royal dispatch testifies that Henry at length realized the prudence of his father's dying injunction relative to the Guises;[1] his conviction, however, came too late, and the marriage of the dauphin Francis, with Mary Stuart, was solemnized with regal pomp on the 24th day of April, 1558.

The details of this splendid ceremonial do not appertain to the history of the queen of Navarre. Jeanne and her husband, however, held their royal rank in the procession; the queen walked by the side of the little madame Marguerite, youngest daughter of the king, destined afterwards to be the bride of the prince of Navarre, and followed next in rank to the queen Catherine de Medici. The king of Navarre supported the youthful bridegroom in his magnificent progress to Nôtre Dame. At the grand banquet in the Palais, on the eve of the bridal day, queen Jeanne sat at the right hand of the king, next in rank after the beautiful bride, and mesdames Elizabeth and Marguerite, the eldest daughter and the sister of the king. On the left of the queen sat the pope's nuncio. After the banquet, queen Jeanne danced at the ball which ensued, taking for her partner madame Claude, second daughter of the king; and she entered heartily into the merriment excited by the attractive pageant, which closed the festivities of the day.[2]

[1] Francis I. emphatically admonished his successor to check the aspiring assumptions of the princes of the house of Guise, if he wished for a prosperous reign, and to transmit his crown to his posterity. The princes of Lorraine, the king warned his son, "pouvaient mettre les enfans royaux en pourpoint, et tous leurs sujets en chemise." Charles IX. put this royal prediction into verse.

[2] Godefroy, Grand Cerém. de France, t. II. Mariage du dauphin François, fils de Henri II. avec Marie Stuart, Royne d'Escosse.

During the remainder of the year 1558, Jeanne d'Albret remained in France. Amid the seductive attractions of the splendid court of Henry II. the queen studied politics and theology. Jeanne possessed not the social talents of her beautiful mother; she had Marguerite's solidity of understanding, without that sprightliness of demeanour, so fascinating in the sister of Francis I. But neither, it must be remembered, had Jeanne d'Albret the prosperity which gilded the early and the middle life of queen Marguerite: this latter shared the throne of Francis I., then the most magnificent in Europe; and her brother's affection rendered her omnipotent over the court. Jeanne d'Albret, on the contrary, held rank only after the royal family; her small territories were unjustly coveted by her suzerain, the king of France; and to reward merit, literature, and personal service, Jeanne had resource but in her own revenues, while the exchequer of the state at her mother's command poured forth its treasures. Sometimes the queen of Navarre found herself comparatively isolated in the midst of that court, over which she was once destined to reign: the courtiers shunned converse with a princess whose learning, and powers of language exposed their own ignorant pretensions; and they looked with wonder on the absent manner, and ruffled brow, with which Jeanne sometimes issued from her conferences with the ministers Barran and Massan, to whom, during the course of this summer, she frequently granted audiences. The learning and the diplomatic ability of Marguerite were inherited by her daughter; but as the power, and the surpassing

beauty of person which had graced their late idol, descended not to Jeanne, the venal courtiers preferred to offer homage at the shrine of Diane de Poitiers.

During the year 1558, an expedition was organized by Antoine de Bourbon for the recovery of Navarre. The armies of Philip of Spain, and of the king of France confronted each other, prepared for combat, on the banks of the river Somme. The Spanish government was embarrassed by home defections and financial difficulty; the advisers of Antoine de Bourbon, therefore, urged him to take advantage of so favourable a juncture for the recovery of his consort's heritage. The levies raised by Henri d'Albret were accordingly reorganized, and, under the command of d'Arros, marched to the Spanish frontier; but the dissensions which arose in the camp, and the religious animosities subsisting between the commanders, added to the secret discountenance of the king of France, occasioned the failure of the entire plan of campaign. Antoine had hastily quitted Paris, to place himself at the head of his army; there, he narrowly escaped falling victim to a plot to betray him into the power of the Spanish viceroy of Navarre, through the treachery of one Gamare, a confidential *valet-de-chambre,* who, like the king's other favourites, was in the pay of the house of Lorraine. The weather, during the expedition, was tempestuous in the extreme; and the rivers, swollen by the heavy rains, overflowed their banks, and caused a disastrous inundation; so that, ever after, this unlucky campaign was ironically alluded to as *la guerre mouillée.*[1]

[1] Favyn, Hist. de Navarre, p. 830 and 831.

The conferences, meanwhile, for the re-establishment of peace between the crowns of France, England, and Spain, opened on the 15th of October, 1558, in the Abbey of Cercamp, near the town of Hesdin. The sovereigns of Béarn, despatched thither an ambassador to negotiate for the restitution of Navarre. The plenipotentiaries on the part of Spain, were, Christine, duchess of Lorraine, Perrenot de Granvelle, bishop of Arras, Philip's favourite minister Ruy Gomez de Silva, and the duke of Alba. The ambassadors nominated by Henry were the constable de Montmorency, who still remained in captivity, the cardinal de Lorraine, the marshal de St. André, Morvilliers, bishop of Orleans, and de l'Aubespine, principal secretary of state. The death of Mary, queen of England, intervening on the 15th of November, the plenipotentiaries agreed upon a suspension of negotiation for the space of two months. During this interval, occurred the famous conference in the town of Péronne, between the king of Spain, the duchess Christina, and Granvelle, with the Guises.[1] This interview exercised a potent influence on the after life, and the fortunes of Jeanne d'Albret. The king of Spain had no military genius; his diplomatic ability, however, was great; and he had inherited his father's hostile disposition towards France. Bigotry was the ruling principle which guided the policy of the Spanish cabinet. To depress the power of France, by involving her in domestic tumult, and thus to cripple her resources, was Philip's design when he sheathed

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire. De Thou, Hist. de son Temps. Mémoires de Rabutin.

his sword, and yet resolved upon remaining the first potentate of Europe. The horror which king Philip professed to feel at the spread of heresy, was genuine. Every kingdom throughout the then civilized world counted its defaulters from the old faith, by thousands. The provinces of the Low Countries, especially, harboured schism. The bold burghers of Antwerp, Ghent, and Liège, clung tenaciously to opinions which bestowed upon them religious emancipation—a boon they had as yet failed to obtain from their civil rulers, despite their frequent revolts. In all countries where the Reformation had made progress, Philip remarked the growing antipathy of the people to submit to a despotic form of government. The contiguity of the provinces of the Netherlands with France, therefore, justly excited his apprehension. The mission for the extirpation of heresy throughout Europe, suited the sentiment of abject veneration for the popedom, in which Philip had been educated; it coincided with the genius of his policy, which aimed at bloodless victories, won by the glossing skill of his *diplomats;* and the repression of that bold spirit of inquiry, which, whenever it became dominant, subverted despotism.

In France, this had been the *rôle* aimed at by the princes of Guise; the weakness of the king of Navarre had favoured the wily designs of the cardinal de Lorraine; for the former's vacillating support injured the cause of reform. Philip penetrated the subtle depths of the cardinal's policy; and, through the medium of the duchess of Lorraine, a secret league was proposed by the king, for the extermination of

heresy, and the restoration of the ancient faith to its supremacy—in fact, to undo all that the reformation had hitherto effected. Christine was a princess of quick intellect, great decision, and devoted to the cause of Rome and the Hapsburg, which she identified as one. She was efficiently aided by Granvelle, who worked on the cardinal's overweening vanity. The princes of Guise were invited to the closest alliance with Spain; their elevation to supreme power was guaranteed, and a mode pointed out by which they might at all times, independently of their sovereign, communicate with the cabinet of Madrid. Thus commenced the fatal league which, for more than half a century, inundated France with blood. The cardinal de Lorraine accepted the mission in the name of his family; and the throne almost succumbed beneath its dire operation. With Francis I., the grandeur of the ancient monarchy had expired; decimated by subsequent bloody wars, the nobles never recovered their preponderance—but, amongst the first of the noble houses whose glory departed, was that of princely Guise.

After concluding this secret convention with Spain, the duke de Guise and his brother returned to Paris to complete the alliance of the youthful madame Claude, second daughter of the king, with the duke de Lorraine, the head of their house. In the pompous ceremonial, the queen of Navarre was to have occupied the same rank as at the nuptial ceremony between the dauphin and Mary Stuart. Jeanne, however, excused herself from gracing this unwelcome festival with her presence, on the plea, that as she had entered the eighth

month of her pregnancy, the fatigue would be too great.[1] The king of Navarre declined upon some account not on record; as did also his sister, Marguerite de Bourbon, duchess de Nevers.

The marriage, however, was solemnized with great magnificence on the 22nd day of January, 1559. The fêtes and rejoicing lasted eight days. The duke de Guise, during this period, held open board to all comers; lists were erected before the Hôtel de Guise, and the magnificence of the jousts there holden, eclipsed those given in honour of his daughter's marriage, by the king himself.[2]

Ten days after the conclusion of these festivities, Jeanne d'Albret gave birth to a daughter, her fifth and last child. The princess was born on the 7th of February, 1559; Catherine de Medici stood godmother, and bestowed her own name, of Catherine, on the infant princess. Soon after her *accouchement*, the queen wrote to the constable de Montmorency, in reply to a letter which she had received from him congratulating her on the happy birth of the princess. Montmorency was still a captive in the Low Countries, where he was engaged in drawing up articles of peace, which were afterwards formally accepted by the belligerent states at Cateau Cambresis. Jeanne and her husband had solicited the constable to support their interests during the negotiation, and to make the restitution of Spanish Navarre one of the conditions of peace. The

[1] Godefroy, Grand Cérém. de France, t. II.—Bénédiction nuptiale du duc de Lorraine, Charles II. et de Claude de France.

[2] Mém. de François de Rabutin, liv. XIème.

queen's letter, written before she quitted her sick chamber, is as follows:

QUEEN JEANNE TO THE CONSTABLE DE MONTMORENCY.

"Mon Cousin,

"I feel so assured of the affectionate regard which you bear me, that I harbour not a doubt on that matter; neither do I question your desire to promote my interest, and that of the king my husband, the which I pray you ever to hold in remembrance. Respecting my health, I thank you much for your kind inquiries. I must tell you that I find myself making progress, and my daughter also; so much so, that I hope to be well again in ten or twelve days; for the rest, the messenger who brings you this letter, will more amply inform you of my condition. I supplicate the Almighty, mon cousin, to give you the felicity of concluding a happy peace, and to bestow upon you a life as long as she desires, who is,

"Vostre bien bonne cousine, et parfaite amie,[1]

"Jehanne."

The queen, nevertheless, did not make the rapid progress towards convalescence which she anticipated. The health of her infant failed; and she suffered much anxiety of mind on this account, for Jeanne was the most devoted of mothers. During the queen's indisposition, the peace of Cateau Cambresis was ratified, April 3rd, 1559. The interests of the queen of Navarre were again passed over; and nothing was stipulated relative to the restoration of Jeanne's ancient heritage. France had always too many grievances of her own to adjust with the Spanish

[1] M.S. de Béth. No. 8788. p. 63. Bibl. Imp. Inedited.

crown, and her need of pacification was generally too intense to permit her to stipulate for other interests than her own. The disappointment was deeply felt by Jeanne d'Albret; she foresaw that it would be probably the last time that this often-debated question could be brought before the Spanish cabinet — on no occasion less momentous than the termination of sanguinary warfare between the two countries, could the cession of a kingdom be proposed to the monarch of Spain.

The articles of peace negotiated at Cateau Cambresis, between the plenipotentiaries of the powers, stipulated that each monarch should respectively restore the conquests effected by his arms during the last eight years. France reinstated the duke of Savoy in his territories, and abandoned her Italian conquests; in return, she was confirmed in the possession of the imperial cities, Metz, Toul, and Verdun; and the places captured in Picardy by the duke Emmanuel Philibert, were restored to her. The king bestowed the hand of his eldest daughter Elizabeth, on Philip II, of Spain, with a dowry of 400,000 gold crowns; and gave his sister Marguerite to the gallant young duke of Savoy, with a portion of 300,000 gold crowns. It was commonly observed throughout France, when the treaty of Cateau was published, that king Henry had relinquished more to obtain the release of Montmorency, than the nation had sacrificed to procure the liberty of Francis I, after the defeat of Pavia.

The result of this peace which proved most disastrous to the destinies of Jeanne d'Albret, was the league of Péronne. Emboldened by his

secret *liaison* with the Guises, then omnipotent in the state, Philip first cautiously intimated to Henry, that his court was infected with heresy; and that the most illustrious of the nobles of France, the house of Lorraine excepted, were converts to the sectarians, and their doctrines. The consequence of this insidious notification occasioned the revival of the celebrated edict of Châteaubriand. The persecution commenced afresh; inquisitorial chambers were established, and even five members of the parliament of Paris were arrested in the presence of the sovereign, on the odious charge of heresy.

The queen of Navarre and her husband had quitted Paris before the commencement of these rigorous measures. Jeanne retired to Nérac, with her children, having declined to participate in the ceremonial of the approaching royal marriages. The character of Philip was well understood by Jeanne d'Albret; she was aware of the unextinguishable hatred which the king of Spain bore towards the legitimate claimant of one of his crowns; she too well divined the enmity he felt towards Antoine de Bourbon, for his heretical opinions, for the accident of his position as first prince of the blood; and as the prince whom she had chosen to espouse, in preference to Philip himself. But before the queen had leisure to organize measures to meet the impending danger, the sudden decease of Henry II, changed the tenor of politics, not only in France, but throughout Europe. In the prime and full vigour of manhood, king Henry was smitten by the lance of Montgomery, at the tournament given in honour of the

nuptials of his daughter Elizabeth, with Philip of Spain. The wound, accidentally inflicted by the count de Montgomery, was pronounced a mortal injury. The lance had entered the king's eye, and penetrated to the brain; and eleven days after the catastrophe, Henry ceased to exist, leaving his crown to his son Francis, the husband of Mary Stuart, the niece of the duke de Guise.

CHAPTER IV.

The king of Navarre is summoned to the capital by the constable de Montmorency — His vacillations and delays — Counsel given to Antoine by queen Jeanne—The king's favourites oppose his departure for the court—Nature of their insinuations—The princes of Guise possess themselves of the government—King Francis II. and his mother retire to the Louvre—Position of Catherine de Medici—Her designs—Triumph of the house of Lorraine—Catherine countenances their projects—Departure of the king of Navarre from Nérac—His dilatory progress towards the capital—He is joined at Vendome by the chiefs of the Huguenot party—He arrives in Paris—Proceeds to St. Germain—His contemptuous reception by the king and queen Catherine—His interview with Catherine—Conduct of the princes of Guise—Antoine retires from court—He visits the tomb of the late king, Henry II. at St. Denis—He is joined by Condé—Interview of the princes with Throckmorton, the English ambassador—Message sent to king Antoine by Elizabeth, queen of England—His reply—The princes receive a command to attend Francis II. to Rheims for the ceremony of the king's coronation—Letter of the cardinal de Bourbon to the duchess de Nevers—Menaces of the king of Spain—Their effect upon Antoine—He accepts the mission of conducting the queen of Spain to the frontier—Perilous position of the queen of Navarre—Design of the cardinal de Lorraine to cede the fortress of Bayonne to the Spanish crown—The queen retires to Navarreins—She joins king Antoine at Bordeaux—Jeanne takes precedence of the queen of Spain when within the limits of the principality of Béarn—Embassy of the baron d'Audaux to Toledo—Correspondence of Antoine de Bourbon with the king of Spain—Philip's supercilious

reply—Ardent love of study displayed by queen Jeanne—Mission of the Cardinal d'Armagnac into Béarn — His reception by Jeanne d'Albret—He orders the arrest of the minister Barran—The queen of Navarre directs Barran's liberation—Despotic proceedings of the French government—Conspiracy of Amboise—Condé is implicated in the designs of the conspirators—He is examined before the council—He retires to Nérac—The king of Navarre is summoned to attend the states-general assembled at Orleans—Correspondence of Francis II. with the king of Navarre — Counsel given to king Antoine by his consort—Jeanne feels distrust of the machinations of the house of Lorraine—The princess de Condé entreats her husband to refuse obedience to the summons of the court—The king of Navarre determines to proceed to Orleans—Letter written by queen Jeanne to Montmorency — The queen refuses to accompany her consort—She makes a progress throughout Béarn—Jeanne sends an embassy to Rome—Her defence is espoused by cardinal Muret—His harangue before the consistory—Pius IV. consents to receive queen Jeanne's letter—Intrigues of queen Catherine—Her letter to the constable—Arrival of the king of Navarre at Limoges—He receives deputies from the reformed churches of France—His interview with the cardinal d'Armagnac—His reply to the deputation—Antoine's letter to Catherine de Medici—His repulse from Poitiers—The king of Navarre retires to Lusignan—Remonstrance of queen Catherine—She sends the marshal de Termes to encourage the princes to proceed on their journey to Orleans—Her message to the princess de Condé—The queen of Navarre receives orders to arrest the Lutheran ministers of her principality—Her refusal to obey—She retires to Navarreins—Her employment when there—Entry of Francis II. into the town of Orleans—Numerous arrests, made by command of the king—Arrival of the princes—Arrest of Condé—His condemnation to death—Insolent demeanour of the Guises towards the king of Navarre—Conduct of Catherine de Medici—Project to assassinate the king of Navarre—Catherine sends Antoine information of the plot—His brave deportment—Message to queen Jeanne—Illness of Francis II.—Catherine proposes to the king of Navarre to renounce his pretensions to the regency—Assent of king Antoine to the proposal—Decease of Francis II.—Changes at court—Antoine de Bourbon summons his consort to join him at St. Germain—Jeanne confides the care of the principality to the baron d'Arros and the cardinal d'Armagnac—She proceeds to the castle of Nérac with her children.

WHEN the official reports announced that king Henry's recovery was hopeless, the constable de Montmorency despatched a courier with the important news to the king and queen of Navarre, who were then sojourning at Nérac. To remove every lingering doubt from the mind of Antoine, that the danger of the king might be exaggerated, the constable despatched la Mare, Henry's faithful and attached valet-de-chambre on the mission. He was the bearer of letters addressed by the constable, by the princes of Bourbon, then resident in Paris, and by other influential personages to Jeanne and Antoine, urging the latter to hasten to Paris; and, warning the royal pair of the designs of the princes of Lorraine, which could only be defeated by the presence of the chief of Bourbon in the capital, and by his union with the party opposed to the Guises.[1] These missives must have reached the king of Navarre before the decease of Henry; and it is even supposed that Catherine de Medici was cognizant of, and sanctioned the departure of the constable's messenger. The magnitude of the part he was urgently summoned to perform appalled the feeble Antoine. When political power was distant and apparently unattainable, the king of Navarre had resorted to intrigue of every description to acquire authority, though its burden seemed now intolerable. Jeanne, on the contrary, hailed the summons sent by the constable. Her spirit exulted in the grandeur of the prospect opened before them. The guardianship of the young king, scarcely past the age of boyhood, the pacification of parties, the emancipation of France from Spanish

[1] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps. l. 23.

rule; and the abasement of the house of Guise, were the noble missions which seemed now to await her husband, the chief of Bourbon. The thought of queen Catherine, with her subtle genius, and her dexterous diplomacy appears not to have cast even a temporary shadow over the sanguine aspirations of Jeanne. With eloquent fervour, she represented to her husband that now was the time to retrieve the fortunes of the princes, and to reinstate the Bourbons in their proper rank in the councils of the sovereign. She commented with irony on the subordinate position which Antoine had contentedly accepted; and she ventured a comparison between the energy displayed by the great duke, and his brother the cardinal, and the supine indifference manifested by the princes of Bourbon. Taking the young prince of Navarre by the hand, the queen exhorted her husband to insure these high destinies for their son to which his birth entitled him.

From the exhortations of his heroic wife, Antoine turned to the more congenial counsels of his favourites. Pre-eminent amongst these, reigned Nicholas d'Angui, bishop of Mende, the identical prelate whose traitorous connivance with Henry's scheme for annexing the principality of Béarn to the crown of France, had procured his ignominious expulsion from the territories of Jeanne. The versatile mind of this bishop exercised potent influence over Antoine, as he never failed to suggest ingenious remedy, for the personal and political difficulties of common occurrence with his royal patron. The duke de Guise, therefore, had found little difficulty in bringing about the reconciliation of the bishop of

Mende with the king of Navarre, much to the displeasure of Jeanne d'Albret, who had refused to reinstate the bishop in his forfeited offices, or to permit his return into Béarn, though she was unable, or perhaps, was reluctant to interdict his intercourse with Antoine, in virtue of her sovereign authority, when the latter was sojourning at Nérac. This factious prelate, therefore, with Descars, chamberlain to Antoine, and Bouchard, the new chancellor of Navarre, united in dissuading the king from repairing to court in obedience to the summons addressed to him from thence. Antoine's presence they were well aware must prove a grave impediment to the ambitious aspirings of the princes of Guise, whose cause they favoured. Instead of promptly adopting a line of action, which, with the powerful intervention of Montmorency, must have placed the government of the country at his disposal, Antoine trifled away the opportunity in debating the matter, while indulging in ill-timed invectives on the political turpitude of the constable, in permitting the exclusion of the ambassador of Navarre from the congress at Cateau Cambresis. The bishop of Mende even went so far as to express his fears, lest the constable's invitation would prove only a subtle snare to entrap the king into a compulsory exchange of his principality of Béarn in accordance with that design of the late king, who, it was notorious, had acted, in this matter, on the suggestion of Montmorency. The chamberlain Descars, feigned to believe that, should the power of the Guises chance to be dominant, the axe of the executioner would free them from vexatious opponents, even though it were bathed in royal blood; he, therefore, adduced from this

assertion that his conscience would not permit him to advise his master to incur so grave a peril without more positive knowledge of events.

Meantime, while Antoine indulged in these and other gloomy forebodings, the Guises, by a bold, skilfully-planned stroke, made themselves masters of the position so ingloriously ceded by the first prince of the blood. Sensible of the grandeur of the *rôle* that their relationship to the queen, Mary Stuart, would enable them to enact, if they suffered themselves not be forestalled in the favour of Francis II., the duke de Guise, some days before the decease of the king, adroitly availed himself of the universally-felt consternation, to assemble and introduce within the walls of Paris, large bodies of his partisans. When king Henry had received the last sacraments of the church, the duke repaired to the palais des Tournelles, attended by a picked band of gentlemen, devoted to his service. He posted this guard in the wardrobe-chamber of the apartments assigned to him in the palace, and prepared forcibly to oppose any project for the removal of the king. He next rallied to his standard the members of his house; and with such energy and foresight were all the movements of the duke concerted, that, at the moment when king Henry expired, accompanied by the cardinals de Lorraine and d'Este,[1] by the prince Alphonso of Ferrara, he was the first to congratulate the young sovereigns on their accession. It then required little

[1] Hyppolite d'Este, son of Alphonso, duke of Ferrara, and Lucretia Borgia. The cardinal d'Este was a prelate of consummate dexterity in political affairs. He was the uncle of the duchess de Guise.

persuasion, on the part of Guise, to induce the young Francis to accept of his escort to the palace of the Louvre. The body of the deceased king was consigned to the guardianship of Montmorency, the Colignis, the prince de Condé, and the duke de Montpensier. The nomination of these noble personages, was another consummate artifice on the part of the Guises; for, until the obsequies of king Henry were celebrated, the princes remained bound, by the duties of their office, in captivity as stringent as if circled by the walls of the Bastille. Attended by the duke de Guise, king Francis, who had not yet attained his sixteenth year, entered a carriage provided for the occasion, and, escorted by the duke's guard, proceeded to the Louvre. To the duke de Nemours[1] was committed the task of escorting the two queens.

On her arrival at the Louvre, Catherine de Medici betook herself to her chamber of mourning, where, during forty days, inexorable custom required that royal widows should mourn their bereavement. The apartment was hung with black cloth, beset with silver ornaments, intended to represent tears. Never had any previous queen entered that chamber with a mind so little dejected for her loss, or with a heart so tortured by worldly anxieties. The queen beheld her son, monarch of the realm, the rule of which she coveted; but feeble in health, and infirm of mind, without discrimination, incapable even of enacting the part of

[1] Jacques de Savoye, duc de Nemours, one of the most gallant and wealthy cavaliers of the court. After the decease of the duke de Guise, Anne d'Este bestowed her hand upon him.

king; and much less able, therefore, to fulfil the duties of so exalted a station. The true ruler of France, consequently, would be the personage on whom the feeble Francis first cast the burden of his embarrassments, and whose energy should, hereafter, hold in subjection his timid, yet wayward spirit. During the progress of king Henry's malady, the two parties—that of the princes of the blood united with the Montmorency; and that of the princes of Lorraine, supported by the influence of their niece, the queen consort—had each, indirectly, sought to obtain, from the astute Catherine, a pledge of adherence to their interests. The queen, whose hatred of the Guises was notorious, happened, at this period, to be on unfriendly terms with the constable, and with madame de Valentinois;[1] she, therefore, held aloof, knowing that both parties were so equally balanced in public esteem, that, whichever faction she finally judged it expedient to uphold, could hardly fail to become dominant.

Meantime, the party of the duke de Guise (or Guisards, as his adherents began to be popularly termed) daily augmented in Paris, and gained in numbers through the dilatory delays of the king of Navarre. The great majority of the nation, however, beheld with displeasure the efforts of the house of Lorraine to usurp that which appeared to be the peculiar office of the first prince of the blood. Moreover, a powerful party

[1] Catherine resented the alliance which the constable had sanctioned between his second son Damville, and Antoinette de la Marck, daughter of the marshal de la Marck, duke de Bouillon, and Françoise de Brézé eldest daughter of the duchess de Valentinois.

of the nobility declared for Antoine; though his chief strength lay in the adherence of the constable, and his nephews, the Colignis. From her darkened chamber, Catherine watched these indications of popular sentiment; the wonderful faculty which she possessed of combining together, and by intuition peculiar to herself, rendering, as it were, present to her mind a political intrigue in all its several stages, served her well at this juncture. She excelled in minute deductions, and proved herself unrivalled in the faculty of tracing results to their cause. Catherine was forty years old when her husband died; though not strictly handsome, her figure was stately, and formed with perfect grace; she was fluent of speech in the French, Italian, and Spanish tongues; while in the graciousness of her demeanour, her tact, and dissimulation, she surpassed the courtly *savoir* of her great uncle, pope Leo X. The Guises, the young Mary Stuart, and the princes of Bourbon, felt that in the queen dowager, existed the incarnation of that tortuous policy which for centuries had convulsed the Italian states. Jeanne d'Albret in vain attempted, also, to reassure the wavering spirit of Antoine de Bourbon, by expressing her conviction that he, to whom Catherine gave her hand in political alliance, must ere long be master of the destinies of the kingdom; but the king to his consort's deep grief still continued immovable in his resolve to wait events in the tranquil security of Nérac. The duke de Guise and his brother, while Antoine deliberated, omitted no precautionary measure likely to give stability to their administration. All minor posts in the government

were declared vacant; and filled with the adherents of the ministry, which as yet, however, was not publicly acknowledged. The reformation of the council, and the banishment of his ancient enemy, Montmorency, next occupied the attention of the cardinal de Lorraine; but even the daring spirit of that prelate shrank from the responsibility of these reforms. The Guises felt themselves, as yet, established only in the young king's favour through their dexterous scheming, and the entreaties of queen Mary; and they dreaded a reaction, perhaps fatal to their power, when the remonstrances, which they knew were impending from the distant parliaments and courts of the kingdom, should be presented to Francis, enforced by the stern censure of Catherine de Medici, whose character they appreciated too well to doubt but that she would resent their assumption of independent power, by leaguing herself with the Bourbon princes. It was, therefore, indispensable for the future tenure of their authority to gain over Catherine, or, at least, if she openly refused to declare herself of their party, to extort from her a promise of neutrality in the pending contest.

Catherine admitted no one to her presence; foreseeing the difficulties attendant on the advent to power of either factions, she resolved to abide resolutely in her seclusion, and from thence to watch events. The cardinal de Lorraine, however, being equally convinced, as was the queen of Navarre, that Catherine's favour, or discountenance must eventually establish, or crush any administration, boldly determined to compel the queen to grant the interview he had so frequently so-

licited. Accordingly, one day, probably aided in his project by the young queen, he presented himself unexpectedly in her mourning chamber. Without heeding the queen's indignant protest at being thus intruded upon, the cardinal entered upon his errand. With that tact and eloquence in which he was unsurpassed, the cardinal defined her position, as she herself had done in her secret cogitations. He commented on the incapacity of Antoine, and on his heretical tendencies, which were tolerated, if not shared, by the queen of Navarre; he promised the dismissal from office of any individual she chose to name, and the banishment from court of the duchess de Valentinois. He pointed out to the queen that in the event of the formidable coalition of Antoine and his brothers with the house of Montmorency, her influence would be deemed secondary to their legitimate pretensions. Moreover, that with a cabinet thus equally balanced, and in which the Huguenots beheld their chief occupy precedence second only to the king and his brothers, she could not advance the semblance of a reason for demanding a larger share of power than her position as queen-mother warranted. Leagued with themselves, on the contrary, the subtle cardinal argued, the case would be reversed: opposed to the princes, and to a powerful faction of the nobility, the house of Lorraine would perpetually need her support and countenance. Catherine too well appreciated the resources of her own diplomacy to doubt the premises so ably put forth by the cardinal; though she was aware, that when once established in the government, it was not his intent to accept the protection

which he now so plausibly evoked. Catherine, at length, permitted the cardinal to believe that he had vanquished her reluctance by his importunate pleadings; she then deliberately signified her assent to the administration of the Guises, and promised her open recognition of, and her private support for their government. Catherine, also, concurred in their project of removing the constable from his high offices. This step proved a defective link in Catherine's finely-drawn politics; for the disgrace of Montmorency, whose house was alone powerful enough to compete with that of Guise, removed the only barrier to the unlimited dominion of the uncles of the reigning queen. Subsequently, the queen became sensible of her oversight, and sought, when too late, to repair the error.[1]

Fearlessly, now, the Guises derided the machinations of king Antoine, who still remained at Nérac. The clergy, and the ultra-Romanists throughout the kingdom, looked upon the cardinal and his brother as specially deputed by God to preserve the ancient faith from extinction. The presidents of the parliament of Paris favoured their designs; the king of Spain exhorted his youthful brother-in-law to take to his counsels men animated with so admirable a zeal for the spiritual welfare of his subjects;[2] and last, but not least impor-

[1] Mém. de Michel de Castelnau, l. 1. chap. II. Mém. du maréchal de Tavannes, chap. XV.

[2] Lettre de l'Aubespine; évêque de Limoges, ambassadeur en Espagne, à François II. Négociations et pièces sur le règne de François II.—Documents inédits sur l'Histoire de France, edited by M. Louis Paris—Docum. 4., dated July 19, 1559.

tant, were the secret, but zealous efforts of the young queen, Mary Stuart, in their behalf.

Thus reinforced, the first object of the Guises was to cause their future position in the state to be acknowledged by the nation at large. Accordingly, when the king quitted his chamber to receive the condolences of the parliament, the duke de Guise, presumptuously assuming the peculiar privileges of the princes of the blood, insisted on bearing the train of the royal robe, with the prince de Condé, and the prince de la Roche-sur-Yon.[1] When the deputies, sent by the parliament, had concluded their harangue, they put the customary question on such occasions, "to whom it would please his majesty that they should henceforth apply to learn the royal will and pleasure?" Great must have been the triumph of the house of Lorraine to hear the young king reply, in the presence of the princes, "that by the consent and counsel of the queen his mother, he had chosen his uncles, the duke de Guise and the cardinal de Lorraine, to govern his realm; and that the duke would take the military department under his jurisdiction, and the cardinal the direction of the finances."[2] From that moment, to quote the words of the valiant Tavannes, "*tout fuit, tout crie—vive Guise!*"

During these transactions, Jeanne d'Albret perseveringly continued her efforts to rouse her vacillating consort to a proper sense of his importance in the

[1] Charles de Bourbon, prince de la Roche-sur-Yon, younger brother of the duke de Montpensier. The duke de Montpensier and his brother were the sons of Louise de Bourbon, sister of the great constable de Bourbon.

[2] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, liv. 23.

realm. Failing in her attempts, she wrote to the prince of Condé, desiring him to second her endeavours by making one more fervid appeal to his brother's patriotism. Of all the princes of Bourbon, Louis, prince of Condé, gave the enemies of his house the keenest alarm, while he inspired respect by the consistent conduct which he ever displayed. Of mean stature, but courageous, of quick perception and sound judgment, this young prince had as yet achieved little military repute. Nevertheless, the reformed church, throughout France, looked upon Condé as its future chief; his frank decision of purpose, acquired double appreciation in public esteem when contrasted with the shifting tactics of his brother, king Antoine. A whole month was consumed by queen Jeanne in the thankless office of advocating the interests of a prince, who thus showed himself so recklessly indifferent. At the expiration of this period, the persuasions of his queen, and the remonstrances of the prince, induced Antoine to set out on his journey to court, on condition that Condé, the duke de Montpensier, the count de la Rochefoucauld, Daudois, secretary to Montmorency, and the admiral de Coligny, gave him the rendezvous at Vendôme, and from thence formed his body-guard to Paris. Before he took his unwilling departure from Nérac, Antoine's paroxysms of indecision returned, after a conference with his favourite bishop of Mende, who communicated to his royal master that he had learned from the duke of Alba,[1] "that in case the

[1] Ferdinand Alvarez de Toledo, duke of Alba, born in 1508. The duke was one of the most valiant captains of the age, and successively

princes of Lorraine were molested in the exercise of their functions as ministers by the royal princes, it was the intention of king Philip to create a diversion in their favour by directing the Spanish viceroy of Navarre to cross the frontier and invest Bayonne or Navarreins."

This threat made a deep impression on the mind of the queen of Navarre. She was aware that the king of Spain would oppose, by every artifice, the elevation of Antoine de Bourbon. Philip's tenure of the kingdom of Navarre might be endangered, should Antoine assume supreme direction of the military resources of the realm. As soon, therefore, as Antoine had taken his departure for Paris, Jeanne summoned her faithful servant, the baron d'Arros to Nérac, and committing to his care her children, Henry and Catherine, she proceeded on a tour of inspection throughout the principality. Every fortress of her dominions did the queen visit; she even penetrated to the frontiers of Spain, and gazed towards the capital of her ancestors, Pampluna, so cherished by its ancient princes. Throughout her progress, the queen was enthusiastically hailed, as followed by a brilliant military escort, she presented herself to her subjects. Jeanne reinforced the garrisons of all the frontier towns, and commanded that double stores of provision, and military ammunition should be provided for the fortresses of Bayonne and Navarreins.

filled the highest offices of state. He espoused donna Maria Henriquez Guzman d'Alba Piste, and died in 1582, at the age of 74 years. The duke of Alba had been nominated to espouse the princess Elizabeth of France, as proxy for his master, Philip II. He was, therefore, sojourning in Paris, when he communicated with the bishop of Mende.

The cardinal d'Armagnac probably accompanied the queen on her progress. From the castle of Pau, Jeanne issued letters patent appointing the young prince, her son, lieutenant-general of Béarn, and its dependencies, with the cardinal as his associate in the government, provided that any unforeseen event compelled her to quit her dominions.[1] In all her public and private actions, at this period, the queen showed the greatest caution; Philip of Spain, and the devices of his cabinet, cast always a dark shadow over Jeanne's life. The queen made a brief sojourn at Pau; she returned to Nérac, leaving the cardinal d'Armagnac in Béarn, and made preparation to follow Antoine to Paris, provided his reception by the court seemed propitious.

At Vendôme, meantime, king Antoine was received by a goodly and gallant company. The king was everywhere greeted with enthusiasm, both by the nobles, and the people. The intelligence which the admiral de Coligny brought from Paris, however, was discouraging in the extreme; the Guises, now firmly established in the government, defied their enemies, and had not the counsel of the Spanish ambassador been negatived by Catherine's more cautious policy, a royal mandate would have interdicted Antoine's approach to the capital. To enforce the rights of the princes, there was now no other resource than warfare: the vidame de Chartres[2] advocated this alternative; but the wiser counsels of Coligny prevailed; and it was

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret.

[2] François de Vendome, vidame de Chartres, prince de Chabanois. This nobleman descended from the ancient counts of Vendome, and was the last

unanimously agreed that before any hostile demonstration was made, the king of Navarre should proceed to Paris, and demand the convocation of the states-general —a request certain to meet with denial; but which would serve as a basis for the remonstrances which the princes were preparing to lay before the parliament.

By slow journeys, Antoine continued his unwilling progress. When he reached Paris, the court had quitted the capital for St. Germain. Thither he despatched a chamberlain to notify his arrival, and to prepare for his use, the lodging which he usually occupied in that palace. Those apartments, however, were occupied by the duke de Guise; who absolutely refused to vacate them. The duchess de Guise had likewise been installed in the suite of rooms appropriated for the use of the queen of Navarre. The unfortunate chamberlain was ordered into the presence of the duke and the cardinal. The latter subjected him to a severe cross-examination of the motives of his master's visit, and the number of the king's suite. "Tell your master," exclaimed the imperious prelate, "that it will cost him his life, and that of some 10,000 men before he deprives us of the place, and of the apartments assigned to us here, by the good favour of the king!"[1]

Shortly before the hour when the arrival of Antoine

of his race. Catherine de Medici bestowed at one time much favour on the vidame de Chartres He died, December 16th, 1560, aged 38, leaving no children by his consort, Jeanne, daughter of Louis, baron d'Estissac, governor of La Rochelle.

[1] Régnault de la Planche; Hist. de l'Estat tant de la république que de la réligion, p. 47. De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, l. 23.

was expected, the king left the palace to hunt, accompanied by the duke de Guise; while the cardinal de Lorraine proceeded to pay his respects to the queen, under pretext of announcing the visit of the king of Navarre; but, in reality, to observe how Catherine received that prince. Meantime, by command of the Guises, no preparation had made for the reception of Antoine; and when the latter arrived, not one of the royal household was in waiting to greet him. Even his admission into the palace seemed a doubtful matter; for king Antoine's baggage had been unladen in the court-yard; and his coffers, and those of his numerous retinue were piled here and there, and purposely left to block up the way. For a few seconds, Antoine hesitated whether he should not retrace his steps back to Paris; the Guises had, however, calculated upon the timid spirit of their rival. They knew that rapid and decisive measures created dismay in his mind; and that during the bewilderment of the moment, Antoine would temporize, and consequently alienate many of his adherents by such a display of weakness.

Antoine alighted from his horse, in awe and perplexity; the chilling aspect of the deserted palace-courts had produced the effect which the Guises anticipated. He was immediately ushered into the presence of queen Catherine. The queen was seated at her tapestry-frame; the cardinal de Lorraine stood at her right hand. As the king approached, neither the queen nor the cardinal, suffered any token of recognition to escape them. After Antoine had performed the customary obeisances, Catherine coldly greeted him; but she

resumed her discourse with the cardinal, occasionally addressing a word to the appalled prince, who, completely daunted by this insolent reception,[1] advanced, and actually embraced the cardinal.

On the return of Francis from the chase, Antoine approached to pay his respects, as his majesty alighted from his horse, in the court-yard of the castle, which was still encumbered with baggage. Francis met him with stern reserve; while the duke de Guise studiously held aloof. Astounded at such a reception, Antoine's presence of mind again deserted him; and he drew upon himself the sneers of the court, by condescending to throw the utmost *empressement* into his manner towards the duke, addressing him as "mon cousin," and feigning not to remark the supercilious way in which his overtures were received. Disgusted at this undignified deportment, many of the nobles in Antoine's suite took their leave and returned to Paris, uncertain how far they might be compromised by a prince so careless of his own honour. Others openly abandoned the Bourbons, and ranged themselves on the side of the Guises.

It was presently intimated to the king of Navarre, that accommodation could not be afforded within the precincts of the castle to the members of his suite; his own reception, meantime, yet appeared doubtful, as the duke de Guise refused to vacate the chambers usually occupied by the king. At length, the marshal de St. André, prompted, probably, by madame la maréchale, who had not forgotten Antoine's deed in releasing her

[1] Regnault de la Planche, Hist. de l'Estat tant de la république que de la réligion, p. 47. De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, l. 23.

gentleman usher from the dungeons of the Châtelet, offered to cede his apartments for the king's use. Antoine hastily accepted the proposal, to the triumph of the Guises, and the mortification of his own adherents.[1]

Not satisfied with the indignities already heaped upon the first prince of the blood, the cardinal proceeded to exclude king Antoine from the privy council board: after this contumelious treatment, were it not too well attested to admit of dispute, the fact would appear incredible, that the contemptible Antoine suffered himself to be persuaded to express to king Francis his approbation of the appointment, and the conduct of his ministers.[2]

A missive addressed to him by his high-minded consort, filled with reproachful comments on his unworthy deportment, roused Antoine from his apathy. Jeanne counselled him to demand his congé, and return to her. The delusive hope of the restoration of the kingdom of Navarre, however, had been again presented to the king, by the Spanish ambassador, provided that he abstained from any overt act of disapprobation. Antoine, therefore, instead of resolutely quitting a court which had treated him with ignominy, demanded permission to visit the tomb of the late king at St. Denis, a request graciously acceded to.

The constable de Montmorency, had likewise been despoiled of his offices of grand-master of the king's household, and keeper of the privy seal. Francis, after his father's obsequies were performed, intimated to the veteran constable, that for the future he must yield

[1] La Planche, Hist. de l'Estat, &c., p. 47.
[2] Ibid. De Thou, Hist. de son Temps.

precedence to the Guises, both at the council-board, and in the circle of the queens. Montmorency received the communication with great equanimity, and prepared to retire to Chantilly, notwithstanding the positive commands sent to him by queen Catherine to remain at court. The policy of the queen would have been supported by the presence of Montmorency in Paris. The old constable, however, was not to be diverted from his purpose by the menaces of his royal mistress; and he retired to Chantilly, escorted by so large a number of the most influential personages of the realm, that the king's suite seemed small in comparison.[1]

At St. Denis, Antoine was joined by his brother Condé. Instead of demeaning himself by making unworthy concession to the dominant faction, this gallant young prince had been engaged in organizing the designs of his partisans in Paris. He had, moreover, entered into secret relations with Nicholas Throckmorton, the English ambassador. The alarm of Antoine was unbounded at this announcement; he, nevertheless, after much persuasion, consented to grant Throckmorton a midnight audience at St. Denis, that the ambassador might deliver a message from queen Elizabeth, who warmly interested herself in the welfare of king Antoine, and his noble consort.

It was entirely owing to the entreaties of Condé that Antoine even now consented to admit Elizabeth's ambassador. So entirely had he become impressed with a

[1] La Planche, Hist. de l'Etat de France, &c., p. 20. De Thou. Commentaires de l'estât de la réligion et république, par le président la Place.

conviction of the charmed fortunes of the Guises, that it even irritated him to hear their downfal projected. The message sent to Antoine by queen Elizabeth, stated in general terms "the esteem which her Britannic majesty felt for his virtues; her wish to form an alliance with him for the honour of God; and her trust that by yielding mutual assistance to each other, they might prevent their enemies from injuring the cause of God, and of true religion." With ludicrous promptness, king Antoine replied, "that he should be happy to accept so illustrious an ally in so sacred a cause; but that for greater security, he would correspond directly on the matter with the queen herself."[1]

The intrigues of the Bourbon princes, meantime, escaped not the watchful eyes of the cardinal de Lorraine. Antoine was still sojourning at St. Denis, when a missive reached him, containing a peremptory summons to follow the king to Rheims, where his majesty was about to proceed for his coronation. All the princes were commanded to attend the august ceremony,[2] and required to submit to the position and precedence allotted to them. The cardinal de Lorraine thought his triumph over the princes incomplete, until their humiliation was participated in by the queen of Navarre. Catherine, therefore, signified her desire that Jeanne should journey to court for the occasion. The queen's determination, however, proved as unalterable as that of the Guises; and she positively declined to quit

[1] Lingard—Forbes.

[2] Francis II, was crowned at Rheims, on the 18th day of September, 1559.

her own dominions. "The king of Navarre is here in very good health; he has not sent for the queen, his consort, being yet uncertain whether he will not, instead, return to her himself," wrote the cardinal de Bourbon, to his niece, the witty duchess de Nevers. The cardinal was the only one of the Bourbon princes whose presence at Rheims was dispensed with, probably on account of his age and infirmities. The duchess de Nevers had, likewise, excused herself to queen Mary Stuart, on the plea of her failing health.[1] In the same letter, the old cardinal grumbles, in the most amusing manner, about the treatment experienced by the princes, and considering the unscrupulous manner in which the Guises availed themselves of every means of information, his petulance might have entailed unpleasant results. "Madame," writes the cardinal, "I only wish that you could witness the fine sports going on here, though I protest to you, that I deem you happy in being exempt from the sight. The coronation of the king is postponed until the 17th of this month; after which it is thought that the king of Navarre will make a journey into Lorraine, where the king, it is said, goes to instal madame, his sister,[2] in her *ménage;* from thence, it is said, the queen of Spain will set out to join the king, her husband. As for

[1] The duchess de Nevers suffered frequently from ill-health. She lived, nevertheless, to a good old age, dying at the castle of Augilon in Berry, October 20, 1589, at the age of 73. She is buried in the cathedral of Nevers. Marguerite de Bourbon had four younger sisters, all nobly endowed abbesses. Marie, her eldest sister, was once the betrothed bride of James V. of Scotland.

[2] Claude de France, second daughter of Henry II. and of Catherine de Medici, consort of the young duke of Lorraine.

myself, madame, I shall depart as quickly as I can from this court, and return home, until they command my services to go into Spain, or elsewhere. I can assure you, madame, that seeing what I do see, I shall much more gladly serve them afar off than near."[1]

As soon as the coronation of the king was accomplished, the Guises, by another politic move, separated the princes, and despatched them on different missions from Paris. This step was partly resolved upon, by the unusual energy displayed by the king of Navarre, who, after the coronation, finding himself surrounded by the noblest peers of France, the majority opposed to the pretensions of the house of Lorraine, took courage to enter the council-chamber, and demand the assembly of the states-general. The Guises, having perfect insight into the character of Antoine, played upon his well-known credulity, and thus defeated the cabal. At the council-board, in the presence of king Antoine, they read a letter from Philip of Spain, in which that monarch threatened dire chastisement to any subject of France daring enough to oppose the king his brother-in-law, and the minister whom he had chosen; "if there is any such presumptuous enough thus to rebel, his catholic majesty will annihilate them by the weight of his power, and of his military resources."[2] Antoine understood that the invasion of Béarn was

[1] Négociations et Pièces sur le règne de François II. Col. de Docum. Inédits. p. 108. Bibl. Roy. MSS. de Béth. No. 8655. The cardinal's letter is dated "de Villars Cotterets, le 3 de Septembre, 1559."

[2] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. 1. p. 108. Castelnau. De Thou.

here hinted at; and in proportion as he dreaded that measure, he unfortunately lowered his tone. On the other hand, the Spanish ambassador, and Catherine de Medici, vaguely insinuated that the king of Spain was not unwilling, provided that Antoine acquiesced quietly in the existing order of affairs, to open negotiations for the restoration of Navarre; or that, at least, his catholic majesty would consider whether the island of Sardinia might not be allotted to queen Jeanne in compensation.

This bait was eagerly swallowed by Antoine; and he readily undertook the mission of conducting the young queen of Spain to the Spanish frontier, and of delivering her to the noblemen sent by Philip to receive his bride. "The king of Navarre has promised the king to conduct, and demean himself on this august mission, so as to give his majesty full contentment, and to them (the Spanish nobles) no occasion of complaint," wrote the cardinal de Lorraine, to de l'Aubespine, the French ambassador at Madrid.[1]

Meantime, the queen of Navarre had been exposed to great peril within her own principality. The cardinal de Lorraine, it has been supposed, in his hatred and fear of the Bourbon princes, had secretly consented that Philip should garrison Jeanne's fortress of Bayonne. In furtherance of this design, he despatched orders on his own responsibility, to de Montluc, and the Marshal de Termes, generals commanding in the south, to co-operate with the Spanish viceroy of Navarre. This dark intrigue was discovered by Montmorency; the constable, like-

[1] Docum. sur le règne de François II. p. 160. The letter is dated. "La Haye en Touraine, Novembre, 1559."

wise, asserted that the viscount d'Orthez had been gained over by the Guises, and had engaged to surrender Bayonne on the first summons of the Spaniards. The duke de Guise, and his brother, indignantly denied the imputation; and the discovery of the plot effectually defeated its execution, if it were really contemplated. The queen of Navarre, nevertheless, quitted Nérac, and retired with her children to the fortress of Navarreins. The queen immediately bestowed the command of her fortress of Bayonne upon the baron d'Arros, of whose fidelity she had received ample demonstration.

Jeanne quitted Navarreins about the middle of December, 1559, and journéyed with the prince, her son, to meet her husband, and the young queen of Spain at Bordeaux. Accompanied by Elizabeth, the royal pair entered Pau, on the 20th of December, and there kept the festival of Christmas, 1559. At Bordeaux, and throughout the journey in Guyenne, Jeanne yielded precedence to the queen of Spain, as madame Royale of France. Within her own dominions, at Pau, however, the queen of Navarre asserted her soyereign rank, and everywhere took precedence of Elizabeth; by which act she gave great offence to the king of Spain, and to the court of France.[1]

During his sojourn at Pau, king Antoine commenced another notable negociation for the restoration of Spanish Navarre, without asking the previous assent of his consort, though he freely compromised her name throughont the affair. In truth, this first Bourboon king excelled not in the arts of diplomacy; and his shallow artifice

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire.

must have excited derision amongst the astute councillors of king Philip. On the strength of the promise made to him in Paris by the Spanish ambassador, Antoine despatched on his own authority, Pierre d'Albret,[1] brother of the bishop of Lescar, to sound the intentions of the Spanish king. This individual, whom the king addresses as "seigneur don Petro," on Antoine's arrival at Pau, had made little progress in his mission, not having been able to obtain audience of any of Philip's ministers, as his errand was not acknowledged by the French ambassador. The king, therefore, wrote fresh letters to the king of Spain; he also addressed one to the ambassador, de l'Aubespine. These missives Antoine secretly despatched by Claude de Levis, baron d'Audaux; he also sent instructions to Pierre d'Albret, directing the latter to aid the new envoy in every way in his power. In his letter to the king of Spain, Antoine requested that safe-conducts might be forwarded to himself and to his consort, to enable them to wait upon his majesty, and kiss his hand. "I have sent the sieur d'Audaux," said king Antoine, in his letter addressed to the French ambassador,[2] "one of my gentlemen in waiting, to pray that the king (of Spain) will grant permission to my wife, and to myself to journey, and kiss his hand; having calculated that this expedition must bring us fruitful result; for if I

[1] Pierre d'Albret was afterwards elevated to the see of Comminges, through the favour of Jeanne d'Albret.

[2] Négociations et Pièces sur le règne de François II. publiés d'après les MSS de la Bibliothèque Royale, par M. Louis Paris, par ordre du Roi. Docum. p. 164. The letter is dated, "Pau, le 16ème jour de Décembre, 1559.

obtain anything," adds the royal sophist, "that little will be more than I now possess; if I get no satisfaction, even then I shall be a gainer, as it will serve to dissipate many hopes and illusions with which they have entertained me." Antoine continues, "I have thought it good to notify thus much, as having imparted my project to the king, and to the queen his mother, they were pleased to signify approval."

The sequel of this affair will show with what facility the king of Navarre was imposed upon, and how venial a matter it was thought by any party in the state to palm upon him a delusive scheme.

The baron d'Audaux on his arrival at Toledo, delivered his letters of credence. In virtue of his rank, he obtained audience of Philip. The king, in the first place, eagerly demanded news of his young bride; he then promised to give the baron an answer upon the various articles of his mission, after he had conferred with his council. When d'Audaux had taken leave, Philip sent for the French ambassador, and asked whether Antoine's proceedings had the sanction of his government. De l'Aubespine answered, "that he had received no instructions on the subject."

The result of this reply was, that the king quitted Toledo, leaving letters for the king of Navarre, and for d'Audaux, with his secretary of state, Cortavilla. The latter was likewise commanded to state, in his master's name, "that it would be useless to expose the duke de Vendôme and his consort to the fatigue of a journey into Spain; as when there, the only answer they could receive to their demands, would be a repetition of the

reply given to their ambassador at the conference of Cateau."[1]

Antoine had departed for the Spanish frontier with the young queen, when d'Audaux returned to Pau with Philip's letter and message. Jeanne's mortification must have been excessive, when she learned the humiliating overtures to which she was made accessory by her husband. The queen, however, found consolation for this, and other disquietudes in her love of study. With the steadfast purpose which distinguished the character of her grandmother, Louise de Savoye, Jeanne applied herself to learning; like that renowned princess, she loved knowledge as a source of power: and theology, philosophy, and logic, were the studies which engaged the queen's mind, rather than the more gentle accomplishments. Alone in her cabinet, Jeanne studied the ancient charters, or *fueros*, of Béarn, preparatory to their revision; and she examined into the ecclesiastical questions which convulsed the principality. "The queen of Navarre was eloquent and learned above all the princesses of her age, following in this the example of her mother, queen Marguerite, who by the persuasive eloquence of her discourse, charmed and soothed the very passions and emotions of the soul," says Favyn, with enthusiastic praise, as he recounts the patriotic actions of queen Jeanne.[2]

The revival of the *chambres ardentes*, or inquisitorial chambers, established during the regency of Louise de Savoye, to take cognizance of heresy had created

[1] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps.
[2] Favyn, Hist. de Navarre, l. 14.

tumults in many parts of France. The cardinal de Lorraine was installed in the office of chief commissioner, with the power of nominating other prelates to perform the same functions, in various districts of the kingdom. The cardinal d'Armagnac accepted the office of inquisitor-general over the duchy of Albret, and the principality of Béarn and its dependencies. This appointment, and the pending executions created the greatest consternation throughout Béarn. The cardinal traversed Guyenne, and visited the towns of Poitiers, Toulouse, and Narbonne, leaving behind him sanguinary indications of his fearful powers. At length, he approached Pau, where Jeanne d'Albret held her court; all remained in suspense, watching the reception which the daughter of Marguerite d'Angoulême would accord to a prelate bound on so terrible a mission. At Oléron, while d'Armagnac was passing through the streets, arrayed in the insignia of his rank, the cortége halted, that the cardinal might bestow the customary benediction on the people thronging to gaze at the pageant. Instead of kneeling to receive the priestly benison, the crowd profanely greeted the cardinal with shouts of derisive laughter, and bade him pass on.[1] At Pau, the queen had taken measures to prevent tumult; she received the cardinal with the honour due to his dignity; but by her command, all public disputations on religious matters

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret. La Gaucherie, preceptor to the young prince of Navarre, joined in the mocking cry of the multitude. Although the cardinal d'Armagnac complained of this conduct La Gaucherie retained his appointment at the court of Jeanne d'Albret.

were forbidden by the bishops of Oléron and Lescar. Thus she deprived d'Armagnac of one of his principal weapons. Her next act was dexterously ordained. She granted permission to the cardinal to make inquisition, and to report any suspected case of heresy to the privy council; reserving to herself as sovereign princess, the power of arrest and punishment. The cardinal thinking to awe the queen by the fearless display of the power he held from the cardinal de Lorraine, caused the minister Barran to be arrested, and thrown into prison. Jeanne immediately issued a warrant, under her great seal, which designated the cardinal's act as unauthorized and illegal, and commanded the instant release of Barran. Subsequently, she addressed a spirited remonstrance to the cardinal, informing him that such arbitrary measures could not be tolerated within the limits of the principality; and admonishing him to respect the ancient ecclesiastical codes of Béarn.

The despotic proceedings of the government, meantime, resounded throughout France, creating disaffection and tumult. The execution of Anne de Bourg, for heresy, was followed by countless trials and condemnations. The courts of inquiry proceeded with pitiless severity to exterminate heresy. All who dared openly to oppose the princes of Guise, were doomed to destruction. Rigorous edicts were issued, forbidding any to carry fire-arms; or even to wear a dress capable of concealing weapons. Catherine herself, treated with insolent disrespect by the cardinal de Lorraine, and closely watched by queen Mary, who made a daily report of Catherine's deportment

to the duke de Guise, felt herself a prisoner, and saved only from actual captivity by the readiness of the outward sanction which she bestowed upon the acts of the ministry. Montmorency remained at Chantilly; while Condé was detained under the *surveillance* of the Guises at court. Acts of murder, of lawless aggression, became of daily occurrence in the capital. The president de Minard, one of de Bourg's judges, was assassinated in the public streets, by a Scotch Calvinist of the name of Stuart: inquisitorial measures were then adopted to discover concealed heretics; and terror, with a burning thirst for vengeance, inspired the minds of both the Catholic and the Protestant population of France.[1]

The popular exasperation at length demonstrated itself in the celebrated conspiracy of Amboise; a plot to procure the forcible removal of the princes of Lorraine from the councils of the sovereign, and to procure their impeachment before the states-general. The leaders of the movement were Calvinists; the conspirators, under la Renaudie, their ostensible chief, concerted their measures with consummate skill; throughout every province of France, numbers of the disaffected were organized ready to rise at the signal of their chief, and overthrow the tyrannical government. A body of armed malcontents was to assemble at Blois, it had been arranged, on a given day; after forcibly presenting a petition to the king, their design was to seize the royal person, transfer the government to Paris, and effect the arrest of the cardinal de Lorraine, and his brother. So profoundly secret had the design been kept, that Francis

[1] Mém. de Michel de Castelnau, l. 1. De Thou, Hist. de son Temps.

and his court were quietly sojourning at the castle of Blois, unapprehensive of danger, until within a few days of the period fixed for the execution of the enterprise. When all preparations had been completed by the Huguenot leaders, the plot was basely betrayed to the cardinal de Lorraine, by a lawyer of Paris, named Des Avenelles, who professed the reformed faith, and to whom it had been heedlessly revealed.[1]

The Guises, thus forewarned, easily defeated the machinations of their enemies. The conspirators were dispersed, arrested, and condemned to death; the prisons of France could scarce contain the number of victims doomed to destruction; while the waters of the Seine, and the Loire, actually became tinged with the blood of the multitudes massacred in Paris, and at Amboise, whither the cardinal de Lorraine had transferred the court. The depositions of some of the prisoners implicated Condé—even Catherine herself was suspected by the Guises of secret participation in the plot. Condé was examined by the council, in the presence of the king; he was at length pronounced guiltless of the treasonable attempt, more, however, as a matter of policy, than from any conviction which the Guises entertained of his innocence. The prince soon after retired from Amboise, and sought refuge at his brother's court at Nérac, where he was warmly welcomed by queen Jeanne, whose indignation was greatly excited at the merciless executions desolating France.[2]

[1] Mém. de Michel de Castelnau, l. 1. Mém. de Tavannes. De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, liv. 25.

[2] Ibid. La Planche, Hist. de l'état de France, p. 393, &c. "Chacun savoit," wrote Régnier de la Planche, "que le duc de Guise, et son frère

King Antoine, during these transactions, fearful of being implicated in the pending investigations, placed himself at the head of a body of men-at-arms, and proceeded to the Agenois, where he dispersed, and slaughtered a division of the insurgent forces, about to march to the succour of the Huguenots. This exploit designated as "valiant," at the court of France received neither sanction, nor commendation from Jeanne d'Albret. She deemed it an act fatally reflecting on her consort's reputation to have assailed and slaughtered men, whose opinions he approved, and whose rebellion he would have imitated, had he been endowed with their fearless courage.

The actions of the king and queen of Navarre afforded great solicitude, at this period, to the cardinal de Lorraine. But the condition of the young king cannot fail to inspire compassion: a prey to the deepest depression of mind, or goaded into transports of jealous fury, by the insinuations of his ministers, he found relief in none. Catherine de Medici, stern and resolute in anticipation of future vengeance, for the affronts so heedlessly offered to her, stood, at this period, aloof. The queen, Mary Stuart, ill-judging and reckless, devoted to her brilliant uncle, the duke de Guise, undertook the perilous office of a spy on the actions of her mother-in-law.[1] Hereafter, the fair head which then so proudly wore the diadem of France, paid forfeit

le cardinal estoient deux testes en un chaperon, en sorte que n'y l'un n'y l'autre ne proposaient rien au conseil qu'ils ne l'eussent prémédité ensemble auparavant; on s'esbahit donc comme ce cardinal avait mit en avant de se saisir de la personne de Condé, car son frère fut d'avis tout contraire.

[1] De Thou. Hist. de son Temps.

on the block for the hatred thus incautiously inspired. The constable and his nephews, of the house of Coligny, waited events in gloomy foreboding. The princes of the house of Bourbon gathered round the standard of king Antoine and his heroic consort; and armed bands of men garrisoned the fortresses and towns of Béarn. Attended by Condé, queen Jeanne made her royal progresses, and prepared her subjects for the expected conflict; whilst Antoine indolently lamented the untoward condition of affairs with his favourites, Descars and the bishop of Mende. The assembly of Fontainebleau[1] met, and separated without devising a remedy for the evils which afflicted the realm; and the states-general, were, at length, convoked to meet in the town of Orleans.

A scheme of daring magnitude was then projected by the house of Guise. In the presence of the representatives of the people, it was resolved to exterminate the power of the Bourbon princes; and to suppress heresy throughout the realm, by the scaffold, or the knife of the assassin. After the convocation of the states, at Orleans, the cardinal resolved that no future risings of the people, in behalf of religion, or of the princes, should disturb his peaceful tenure of power. Rumours of the connivance of Condé, in the late sedition at Amboise, daily gained ground;—a suspicion which was confirmed by the arrest of one La Sague, the bearer of certain confidential despatches of Antoine and his brother, to the constable, and others. An attempt

[1] The conferences of Fontainebleau commenced on the 18th of August, 1560.

to surprise the city of Lyons, by Maligny, an adherent of the princes, augmented the fears, and confirmed the sanguinary designs of the princes of Lorraine. Military preparations were made to an unparalleled extent, to support their lawless projects. Troops were distributed over the kingdom: those suspected of favouring the pretensions of the princes, or of being infected with sectarian principles, were detached from their regiments and joined to divisions trusted by the government. The Guises proceeded so far as to suspend, for the time, the powers of the constable as commander-in-chief, so fearful were they that any deviation from the prescribed routine might give their enemies the ascendency.

All things being thus disposed for their project, Francis wrote a peremptory letter to the king of Navarre, commanding him to bring his brother Condé to Orleans, to respond to the treasonable charges alleged against him, in the presence of the states. "Mon oncle," said the young king, "you, doubtless, well remember the letters which I wrote to you, touching the rising which lately happened at Amboise, and also concerning mon cousin, the prince de Condé, your brother, whom many of the prisoners accused vehemently; a belief which I could not then entertain against one of his blood, out of the affection which I bear towards my own lineage, hoping that time, and his own loyal deportment, would demonstrate the falsehood of his unhappy accusers, and give me satisfactory proofs of his innocence. Nevertheless, I have since received repeated information, from various parts of my kingdom,

of the evil designs and deeds of the said prince against the welfare of my realm; all which reports, however, I have steadily refused to credit, until lately, when I have myself perceived such evident tokens of disloyalty, that I have decided to investigate the matter, having resolved not to pass my life in trouble, through the mad ambition of any one of my subjects." The king then charges his uncle to bring Condé to Orleans, whether the said prince were willing or not, "for should the said prince refuse obedience, I assure you, mon oncle, that I shall make it soon apparent that I am king, as I have commissioned monsieur de Crussol to explain to you both."[1]

This letter, half persuasion, half menace, created much consternation at the little court of Nérac. Queen Jeanne divined at once some sinister design in this project of the Guises to assemble together the princes of the blood, and the most illustrious personages of the kingdom; and she strongly opposed the departure of her consort, unless Antoine consented to be accompanied by an armed force, powerful enough to awe the enemies of his house. "It is your salvation," exclaimed she to Condé, "and that of the king of Navarre, to remain here. Stay, or at least appear before the princes of Lorraine surrounded by a force which shall compel them to respect the august blood of Bourbon!"

Antoine, however, perversely affected to see the affair in a totally different light, and as his consort grew more

[1] Lettre de François II. à Antoine, roy de Navarre—Mémoires de Condé, t. I. p. 572.

earnest in her admonitions to him to remain, his desire to visit the court augmented. The count de Crussol assured the king that he had nothing to apprehend. Catherine de Medici wrote private letters to Antoine of the same purport, being either ignorant of the ultimate design of the Guises; or that weary of living subservient to their policy, she considered that the arrival of the princes would create a diversion favourable to her own projects. Condé constantly received secret warning that some perfidious scheme was meditated by the court; the disarming of the inhabitants of Orleans, and the military preparations everywhere apparent, afforded, in queen Jeanne's opinion, confirmation sufficiently alarming. The duchess of Ferrara,[1] Marillac, archbishop of Vienne, the duchess de Montpensier,[2] Catherine's favourite lady of honour, all warned the princes to be on their guard. The princess of Condé wrote to her husband, that "every step he took towards the court, brought him nearer to destruction; and that if his death was inevitable, it was more glorious to die at the head of an army, than to perish ignominiously on the scaffold!"

In vain, also, Jeanne with tears besought Condé to remain behind in Béarn; the prince was too courageous,

[1] Rénée de France, daughter of Louis XII., and of Anne de Bretagne.

[2] Jacqueline de Longwy, ou de Givry, daughter of Jean, sieur de Givry, and of Jeanne, natural daughter of Charles, count d'Angoulême, father of Francis I. Jacqueline de Longwy married Louis de Bourbon, duke de Montpensier, fourth prince of the blood-royal, nephew and heir of the constable de Bourbon. Madame de Montpensier was first lady of honour to Catherine de Medici. She was a princess of great learning, and strong intellect, and she favoured the Reformation.

or too confident of his innocence to suffer his brother to proceed alone to court.

"The queen-mother," wrote d'Aubigné,[1] persuaded the king of Navarre to advance with fearless courage; so that at length all this *patelinerie* made him resolve on the journey, against the counsel of his faithful friends and servants, and above all against the advice of the Dame de Roye, mother of the princess de Condé, all these faithful counsellors being unfortunately regarded by the princes as foolish, and importunate."

With a mind oppressed by sorrowful anticipations, Jeanne prepared to take leave of her husband, and of his gallant brother. Aware of the participation of Condé in the counsels of the late conspirators, although he shared not in the actual demonstration against the Guises, Jeanne could not but deplore his infatuation in placing himself in their power. The conduct of the king of Navarre had been more guarded; although the cardinal de Lorraine distrusted his professions of submission. In her anxiety for the fate of the king and his brother, Jeanne wrote to the constable, praying Montmorency to afford them every aid and protection in his power. "Mon cousin, I fail not to write you a line, knowing that Dardeuil is about to be despatched to you, to entreat, mon cousin, that you will continue to the king my husband, and towards myself, that good will you have always been accustomed to show us, especially at this time, when the king will need your counsel. I pray you be to him such as he hopes and desires; and

[1] D'Aubigné, Hist. Univers, t. 1. l. 2.

as for myself, I beg you only to keep me in his good favour and grace."[1]

Antoine continued to disregard all the remonstrances of his wife; for the queen felt daily more persuaded that some treacherous *coup d'état* was meditated. Every despatch brought indications of the insincerity of queen Catherine. In the letters delivered by the count de Crussol to the king of Navarre, Catherine had caused it to be inserted, on purpose to embroil Montmorency with Jeanne and her consort, that la Sague, the bearer of the despatches of the princes, had been arrested on private information afforded by the constable. About a fortnight afterwards, Montmorency was informed by Catherine herself of what she had done, in an audience granted to him by the queen at St. Germain. Catherine laughed excessively at, as she termed it, "*le bon tour qu'elle avoit joué à son compère.*" The indignation of the stern Montmorency, however, was greatly kindled; and when he quitted the palace, he wrote to Jeanne and Antoine to deny the implied treachery. "Sire," said he, in his letter,[2] "you can well imagine for what reason the queen made that charge. I very humbly entreat you not to believe anything they may have informed you of, nor any matter in which they may have made, or may cause me to speak words offensive to your honour and to your rank. If any other parties except the queen-mother, and the king,

[1] Lettre de la reine de Navarre, au connétable de Montmorency. Bibl. Roy. F. de Béth. 8671, fol. 19.—Inedited.

[2] Le connétable de Montmorency, au roy de Navarre.—Mémoires de Condé, t. I. p. 583.

had dared to write such statements, I should at once speak, and act as becomes a man of honour, when falsely accused of a thing of which he has not, even once, thought."

The queen of Navarre, and the princess de Condé, continued to receive intimations, warning them to be on their guard, and to keep the princes from attending the states-general, through the duchesse de Montpensier, the archbishop of Vienne and others, who all vaguely hinted that the caution proceeded from queen Catherine herself. The king of Navarre, however, was not to be dissuaded from obeying the royal summons; his favourites, Bouchard and Descars, dependents of the princes of Lorraine, were as eloquent in persuading their master to disregard the wise remonstances of his consort, as they had before industriously thwarted her desire that he should hasten to court after the decease of king Henry. "*Madame, je m'assure tant sur les promesses du roy, et de la parole de la royne sa mère, et en la justice de notre cause que je ne pense pas qu'il puisse m'arriver mal!*" seems to have been the invariable reply of the impracticable Antoine to his queen's objections.

Alarmed at the hesitation displayed by Antoine and his brother, in setting out from Nérac, Catherine despatched the cardinal de Bourbon to admonish the king and queen of Navarre that king Francis viewed with suspicion and displeasure the reluctance displayed by them to obey his royal mandate. The cardinal was, moreover, commissioned to deliver a message from the king, pledging his royal word that Antoine and his brother,

Condé, should be allowed to depart from court after they had confronted their accusers. In the parting audience which she granted to the cardinal, Catherine wept while she deplored the miserable condition of the kingdom, torn by faction and religious dissension. "What is the object of the princes!" exclaimed she, "in fomenting civil discord? If affairs go against them, why do they not come in person and remonstrate?"

The cardinal de Bourbon seems to have been completely imposed upon by these tears of Catherine; "*ces larmes de crocodile*,"[1] as a contemporary historian designates the queen's emotion; he wept with the astute princess, and promised to bring his brothers without delay before the tribunal of the nation. The Guises thought that the queen-mother, both dazzled and subdued by the grandeur and the extent of their success, had resigned herself to become their subordinate in the administration. They, however, found that they had been deceived; and that she had been preparing the sharp weapon for their overthrow, when apparently most devoted to their interests.

The persuasions of the cardinal de Bourbon, after his arrival at Nérac, completely prevailed over the prudent counsels of Jeanne; and together the brothers set out for Orleans, attended by a numerous retinue, including the chancellor Bouchard. The queen bade her husband farewell with many tears: at the moment of his departure, she made another powerful but fruitless appeal to him, to leave Condé behind. "Monseigneur, consider your own honour and safety. Leave M. le Prince here, to com-

[1] Régnier de la Planche.—Hist. de l'Estat de France, &c.

mand in your cities of Béarn, until after your most desired return!" With almost incredible infatuation, Antoine persisted in rejecting his consort's solicitations. Queen Jeanne said no more; but contented herself with dictating a reply of stern refusal to the message brought to her by the cardinal de Bourbon, from Catherine, praying her, in courteous terms, to join the court at Orleans. If Jeanne could not prevent her husband from compromising his honour and his life, she possessed sufficient resolution and foresight to preserve herself and her son from like peril.

The king of Navarre had no sooner, therefore, taken his departure, than Jeanne, with her children, quitted Nérac, and proceeded to Pau. There she assembled her thirteen barons in council. By their advice she levied troops, and placed her principality in a complete state of defence. She stationed garrisons in all her fortresses bordering upon France. So deeply impressed was she with the necessity of propitiating, at this critical period, the Roman Catholic portion of her subjects, that she resolved to despatch Pierre d'Albret, now bishop of Comminges, to Rome, on a mission of conciliation to his holiness, Pius IV. In her letter to the Pope, Jeanne gave Pius the assurance that it was not her intention, to appropriate, or in any way alienate the temporal possessions of the Romish clergy, throughout her hereditary dominions; and she concluded by offering an excuse to his holiness for the long period she had suffered to elapse, before she tendered her homage to the Holy See. The Pope being exceedingly enraged at the proceedings sanctioned in Béarn by Jeanne and her

consort, whom he branded as "heretics and schismatics," forbad the queen's ambassador to approach Rome. Queen Jeanne, however, with politic foresight, obviated this expected obstacle by the secret overtures which she had made to cardinal Muret,[1] a prelate of rare ability and learning. Muret undertook to plead Jeanne's cause in the consistory; to remonstrate in private with Pius; and to entreat the Pope not to suffer the invectives of the Spanish ambassador, to prejudice him against the submissive overtures of his "queenly penitent." In consequence of the cardinal's interference, the bishop of Comminges was admitted to kiss his holiness's slipper; after which Pius received, and publicly read queen Jeanne's letter—a document that appeared to give him satisfaction.

Although the cardinal Muret was the ostensible agent in this temporary reconciliation between Jeanne d'Albret and the Holy See, it is believed, and a careful consideration of documentary evidence confirms the supposition, that Catherine de Medici herself disposed the pope to receive Jeanne's ambassador with favour. It is impossible to study the political history of this period without feeling amazement at the wonderful resources in intrigue possessed by queen Catherine. Sometimes her acts appear to aim in direct opposition to her private projects

[1] Marc Antoine Muret was born at Limoges in 1526. One of the greatest classical scholars in France, Muret taught for some time in Paris at the college de Ste. Barbe, and was honoured by the patronage of Henry II. and queen Catherine. Accused of an atrocious crime, Muret was compelled to fly from France. He retired to Rome, where his learning, and rare eloquence soon raised him to wealth and distinction. Cardinal Muret died in 1584, at the age of 58.

of aggrandizement; but follow the intrigue to its termination, and some wondrous complication, or disposition of events, favourable to Catherine's designs, is certain almost to result. Catherine went to Orleans, in apparent obedience to the projects of the duke de Guise, and the cardinal his brother. She had aided them with the power of her subtle wit, to draw the king of Navarre, and the other princes thither; but it was her firm resolve to depart from thence, mistress of their position. As one step towards this design, which could only be accomplished by the help of the princes, she promoted the seeming reconciliation of Antoine de Bourbon and the Holy See, with a view of presenting him, as chief and leader of the Catholic population of France, in opposition to the duke de Guise. Catherine's secret correspondence with Montmorency develops the same intricate and far-sighted policy. While in the presence of the Guises, and on all public occasions, the queen affected to treat the constable with haughty indifference, she privately demanded his sympathy and support against the oppressions of her son's ministers. "Mon compère," wrote Catherine, at this period, "I desire greatly that your health might permit you to remain at court; for then I believe that all would be better conducted than now, and that you would aid me to deliver the king, *hors de page*; for you have always willed that your master shall be obeyed by all his subjects. I shall not write a longer letter, but will leave the sieur marquis,[1]

[1] The marquis de Villars, who was the bearer of Catherine's letter to the constable.

to give you farther news of me, only contenting myself by observing, that I wish that you alone were here with the king; *vostre bonne commère et amie.*—Catherine."[1]

Meantime, the threatening aspect of affairs might well have daunted a prince of firmer resolution than Antoine de Bourbon. The country swarmed with soldiers, whose fierce aspect awed the people, and repressed the enthusiasm with which they welcomed the princes. At Limoges, deputies from the reformed churches of France met Antoine, to offer him a force of six thousand men, as an escort to Orleans, and engaging to defray the expenses of their maintenance for six months. At the same time, nine hundred noblemen offered to join the standard of the Bourbon princes.[2] The proposal was a tempting one; the warnings so repeatedly uttered by Jeanne d'Albret often rung in the ears of king Antoine; but to obey the royal mandate, marching at the head of such a body of troops, would be considered as a virtual declaration of war. The distraction of king Antoine's mind, at length became so great, that he took to his bed with a low fever, in which condition the cardinal d'Armagnac found him, at Vertueil, the palace of the count de la Rochefoucauld, having been despatched by the king to command Antoine, very expressly, not to approach the court with more than his usual retinue of attendants. The cardinal manœuvred with so much dexterity, that he prevailed; and the princes were persuaded to continue their journey, fol-

[1] Négociations et Pièces sous le règne de François II., p. 678. Col. de Docum. Inédits.

[2] La Planche, Hist. de l'Estat de France, p. 609

lowed only by their respective households. During the audience of farewell which king Antoine granted to the deputies sent by the protestant communities of France, he addressed them at length, and concluded his harangue by promising to ask the king's gracious pardon for all who had taken up arms to meet him thus at Limoges. "Pardon!" indignantly responded one of the deputies; "think only of asking pardon for yourself, monseigneur, and that right humbly, when you are going to yield yourself a prisoner, with a rope round your neck!"[1]

At a place named Mussidan, Antoine attempts to relieve the disquietude of his mind by addressing a long epistle to Catherine, in which he bitterly complains of the indignities and accusations to which he and his brother were subjected. Occasionally, in king Antoine's letters, he manifests a spirit worthy of his princely descent; but, in this epistle, the indications which he affords of his trifling and irresolute character, must have moved the scorn of the queen. "Madame," writes king Antoine,[2] "I have received the letters which it has pleased you to send, by Bouchet, my secretary, who found me in this place confined to my bed. It was meet, therefore, that I should hope to derive consolation from these said letters; nevertheless, as no one can be considered to have his feelings and emotions under perfect command, especially when they have rise in events of only too probable occurrence, I confess to you, madame, that your letters, though they imparted comfort,

[1] La Planche.

[2] Lettre d'Antoine de Bourbon à la reine mère du roi. Bibl. Roy. MS. F. de Colbert, vol. XXVII.—Inedited.

have not dissipated the languor which assails me; so much so, that I perceive that this indisposition, a slow fever, will always hang about me, until I have the felicity to see the king, and you, madame." Antoine continues, in the same strains, to lament the misrepresentations of his enemies; he implores the queen to give no credit to their assertions, and he promises to travel as rapidly as the condition of his health will permit.

King Antoine's letter is dated October 9th. Between that time, and the 18th of the same month, Catherine had responded so satisfactorily to his expostulations, that her letter inspired Antoine, as he states, with vigour to continue his journey. He, therefore, indited a second epistle from Lusignan, to inform the queen that he intended to make his entry into Poitiers on the following day.[3] On the morrow, nevertheless, when the king and his brother presented themselves before Poitiers, they found the gates of the town closed; the cannon ready mounted on the ramparts, for action; while Montpezat, governor of the town, peremptorily refused to admit them. In utter consternation, king Antoine returned to Lusignan. Again, the princess of Condé renewed her protest against her husband's further progress; and implored Antoine to return to Nérac, whilst it was yet time. After a few days of anxious suspense, the marshal de Termes arrived, to make the *amende honorable*, bringing letters from Catherine, in which she gave some sort of explanation of their repulse from

[3] Lettre d'Antoine de Bourbon à la reine mère du roi.—MS. Bibl. Roy. F. de Colbert.

Poitiers, and invited the princes to proceed; the princess de Condé received letters at the same time, from the duchesse de Montpensier, in which Catherine sent her a message to the effect, "*que c'étoit la mort de son mary s'il venoit à la cour.*" Probably, the repulse of the king of Navarre from Poitiers was the result of a manœuvre on the part of queen Catherine, alarmed at the daring schemes of the Guise faction; or, perhaps, she had only then ascertained their bloody design relative to Condé, and desired as eagerly then to check the approach of the princes, as she had before promoted it. The wit of king Antoine, however, was far too circumscribed to follow in the mazes of Catherine's tortuous intrigues; and, as he persisted in giving faith to the authorized and open communications sent him by de Termes, the princess de Condé took leave of her husband in tears, "*ains s'en alla esplorée comme elle estoit venue,*" adds one of the chroniclers of these events.[1]

Meantime, simultaneously with Antoine's repulse before the town of Poitiers, queen Jeanne received a peremptory command from the privy council, to arrest the ministers, David, Boisnormand, Theodore de Bèze, and three others of minor note, and to send them, under a strong guard, to Orleans, that they might be put on their trial for sedition.[2] The better to enforce this mandate, the marshal de Termes was directed to concentrate the forces under his command on the frontier of Béarn; and to hold himself prepared to execute the royal behest, in case Jeanne should refuse obedience.

[1] La Planche, Hist. de l'estat de France.

[2] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. I. p. 148.

The menacing language adopted by her former suitor, the duke de Guise, occasioned the queen little dismay; but, as a measure of prudence, she retired, with her children, to her strong fortress of Navarreins, and then issued her *ordonnance* respecting the ministers. Jeanne courageously refused to deliver them over to the sanguinary fate which awaited them at Orleans. She, however, revoked the permission given to them, to teach throughout the duchy of Albret, and the other domains which she held as fiefs of the crown, and restrained their ministrations to the principality of Béarn, over which she acknowledged no superior. All the ministers rendered prompt obedience to the queen's mandate, excepting Théodore de Bèze, who preferred to retire, and seek refuge at Geneva.

Apprehensive lest the marshal de Termes should cross the boundary of the principality, and lay siege to Navarreins, queen Jeanne appointed Dumesnil to be governor of the fortress. He was a valiant Huguenot captain; and one of those whose services had been declined by king Antoine at Limoges. For some weeks Jeanne sojourned within the shelter of that friendly fortress, the construction of which had been one of the works undertaken, and achieved by Henry d'Albret and Marguerite, after their union. During the period that she remained in suspense, whether her refusal to apprehend the Huguenot ministers would be punished by the invasion of her territories, Jeanne's recreation consisted in aiding La Gaucherie, preceptor of the young prince of Navarre, in the lessons he daily gave his pupil. In the life of Jeanne d'Albret there

are no passages of brilliant happiness, and few of courtly magnificence upon which her biographer may enlarge: surrounded by tumult, and oppressed always with care, her existence passed in laborious conflict. She was born rather to command admiration by her talents, her heroic self-denial, and her learning, than to inspire love. The volatile and courtly Antoine de Bourbon felt himself out of his sphere in the decorous and most irreproachable circle of his consort: while Jeanne's ministers expounded, or discussed the philosophy of the ancient schools, the lively imagination of king Antoine wafted him to the perfumed saloons of the Louvre, where the beautiful young maidens in queen Catherine's train nightly assembled—*l'escadron de la reine-mère*, as this brilliant band, which numbered three hundred ladies, was popularly termed. During the hours which the queen allowed herself for relaxation, she worked tapestry, and discoursed with some one of the learned whom she protected. Like her mother, queen Marguerite, Jeanne understood the Greek and Latin languages. She spoke Spanish with fluency; her style in writing her own tongue is terse and vigorous; she excelled in the arts of rhetoric, and her readiness of speech was so great, that at the council-board she was often known to rise and discourse eloquently upon subjects which she had not previously meditated.

Jeanne's temperament was given to melancholy: often we are told, her ladies would observe the queen sitting in the attitude of deep thought, totally unobservant of those around her; then, if suddenly appealed to, her magnificent eyes would beam with intelligence, as she

joined in the discourse, with great apparent interest. This animation, however, lasted only for a brief interval, when she relapsed again into meditation. The education of the young prince seems to have been very precocious. One of his daily tasks consisted in making Latin and Greek translations, and rendering them back again into the original language. The queen generally corrected with her own hand these exercises; and when she was separated from her son, his preceptor forwarded them for her inspection. At the age of eight, it is asserted, that Henry had translated the greater part of Plato, under the guidance of his royal mother. As the gallant and chivalrous Henri Quatre cared little in after life for student's lore, it is to be presumed that the elaborate lessons of his boyhood left few pleasant reminiscences. Henry, at a very early age, wrote a bold and legible hand; an accomplishment which few princes then possessed. The hand-writing of queen Jeanne is small, and, for the age, very distinct. The character is pale; and many of her writings bear the impress of haste.

The intelligence which reached Jeanne, and her little court at Navarreins, after the lapse of some weeks, was portentous enough to awaken dread in every heart. King Francis, accompanied by the duke de Guise, and his brother, entered Orleans, on the 18th day of October, at the head of a body of 8000 men, with drums beating, colours flying, and surrounded by the paraphernalia of war.[1] Catherine de Medici, with her daughter-in-law, Mary Stuart, made her entry the same afternoon, mounted on a white palfrey, and superbly

[1] De Thou, liv. 26, p. 564. La Place, Commentaires de l'Estat.

attired. All the inhabitants of Orleans had been previously required to give up their arms; and every household suspected of harbouring heretical inmates, had troops quartered in it.[1] Every noble in France had been summoned to attend this congress; and no one was permitted to plead in excuse, age, or sickness, under pain of immediate attainder.

The day following the entry of the court, warrants were issued, commanding the arrest of Groslot, high bailiff of Orleans, and of several hundred noble personages of the realm:—including the nephews of the constable de Montmorency, the count de la Rochefoucauld, the prince de Porcien, and many illustrious ladies of Orleans, amongst whom figures the name of the old baillive d'Orleans, nurse to the little duke de Beaumont, eldest son of Jeanne d'Albret. In utter consternation, the inhabitants of Orleans expected the arrival of the princes: and the nation, arraigned before the tribunal of the cardinal de Lorraine, seemed to wait its doom in gloomy silence.

On the last day of October, king Antoine and his brother entered Orleans. They were publicly received by Francis, attended by the Guises. The platform upon which the throne stood, was surrounded by an armed guard. On the evening of the same day, the prince de Condé was arrested as he left the apartment of Catherine de Medici, for his alleged participation in the conspiracy of Amboise, and his relations with the insurgent leaders of the Calvinistic faction. As Condé, escorted by a guard of soldiers, was on his way to the

[1] Mém. de Michel de Castelnau, l. 2. chap. x.

prison prepared for him, he met the cardinal de Bourbon, whose persuasions had confirmed the princes in their design to confide in the word of the king, and fearlessly to approach the court. "Monseigneur," reproachfully exclaimed the prince, "by your credulous faith in the promises of the court, you have delivered your brother to the executioner!" The cardinal, it is reported, turned aside and wept.[1]

Privy-council warrants were next issued for the arrest of Condé's mother-in-law, the countess de Roye, the courier la Sague, and of Bouchard, chancellor of Navarre,[2] and others. The position of the king of Navarre was perilous in the extreme; and had it not been for the protection of queen Catherine, he doubtless would have shared his brother's prison. The cardinal de Lorraine had already determined upon the death of Condé. As the future vengeance of Antoine, therefore, might greatly be apprehended, he essayed every means to involve the latter in the same destruction. The duke de Guise, during this period of terror, demeaned himself with greater moderation; more politic, and less sanguinary in his resentments, he refrained from voting in the council, when the doom of Condé was discussed; and, moreover, he affected to deprecate the violent counsels of his brother.

[1] La Place, Commentaires de l'Estat, &c., fol. 103.

[2] The treacherous Bouchard was arrested by his patron, the cardinal de Lorraine, because the latter believed that he withheld secrets of vital import to the king and queen of Navarre; secrets, which would probably involve the former in the designs of the insurgent leaders, and therefore furnish ground for an appeal to the privy-council for the impeachment of king Antoine.

The prince de Condé was eventually adjudged to suffer the penalty of death by decapitation before the royal lodging in Orleans, on the 26th day of November. When this most arbitrary sentence was published, Antoine de Bourbon visited the cardinal and his brother, to request their intercession with the king, in behalf of the prince. The Guises received the king of Navarre without the usual marks of respect paid to royal personages; and they returned a decided negative to his request. Antoine made a like unsuccessful suit to the two queens. Catherine shed tears, whether real or feigned, it were difficult to say, and lamented the straits to which the princes were reduced. A few days afterwards, however, she rendered the king of Navarre an essential service, by which his life was probably saved; for with the destruction of the princes, her own ambitious views would have been annihilated. It is related that the cardinal de Lorraine, being determined to effect the ruin of both the Bourbon princes, resolved to render the helpless young king the agent of his atrocious design. Francis had been previously exasperated almost to frenzy by the insidious reports of his ministers. It was, therefore, decided that the king should summon Antoine into his presence; after reproaching him for the disturbed condition of the kingdom, Francis, as, if suddenly transported with passion, was to strike at him with a poniard, when the duke de Guise, the marshal de St. André, and the cardinal de Lorraine, who were alone to be present at the interview, were then to fall upon the unfortunate prince, and complete the bloody deed.

Catherine, having been informed of this project by the young king himself, remonstrated against it in horror, and warmly conjured her son to refrain from so heinous a crime. She then sent for the duchesse de Montpensier and commissioned her to warn Antoine to excuse himself, upon any plea from visiting the king in private. When next summoned by the king, Antoine, consequently, declined to obey. A second, and more peremptory mandate followed. The king of Navarre, who was personally brave, then resolved to repair to the royal presence. He called, however, a favourite valet-de-chambre named Renty, and desired him, in case of his assassination, to carry the shirt stained with his blood to his consort. "Brave Renty, the queen will avenge my death. Let her send the fragments of this shirt to every court in Europe, that all its sovereigns may read in my blood how they ought to avenge the assassination of a king!"[1] When Antoine entered the apartment of Francis, the king stood by a table attired in a loose robe, having a short dagger in his girdle. The marshal de St. André, and the cardinal de Lorraine were also present. The latter instantly closed the door of the cabinet behind Antoine. The king of Navarre, warned beforehand, carefully avoided opposing the king on any matter; and his demeanour was so humble and conciliatory, that Francis found it impossible to provoke a dispute. Probably the young king felt his courage fail, when called upon to perpetrate the contemplated crime; he, therefore, dismissed Antoine from his presence unharmed. The cardinal de Lorraine, beside himself

[1] Cayet, Chron. Novenaire, t. 1.

with rage, was heard to exclaim: "*Voilà le plus poltron cœur qui fût jamais!*"[1] This anecdote would appear incredible, if queen Jeanne herself was not the guarantee of its truth; for the fact is related in one of her manifestoes published in the year 1568, in which she states that Catherine had related to her the part which she and the duchesse de Montpensier took in saving the life of the king of Navarre on this occasion.[2]

As the day for the execution of Condé approached, all was terror and confusion within the city of Orleans. The Guises remained inflexible to the numerous intercessions made them to spare the life of the prince; and such was the *surveillance*, also, to which the king of Navarre was subjected, that, meeting the unhappy princess of Condé, he dared not address her, but turned his head another way. All at once, king Francis fell sick; his illness rapidly increased; and, in a few days, Paré,[3] and his surgeons, pronounced his majesty's recovery to be hopeless. The malady of Francis was an abscess in the head. The king's sombre and sinister looks, and the fevered irritation of his spirits, had been remarked, with wondering astonishment, by his subjects of Orleans. The Guises, in consternation at the reverse which awaited them, and dreading the anticipated vengeance of the princes, sought to hasten the execution

[1] Davila, Histoire des guerres civiles de France, t. I. p. 85.

[2] Queen Jeanne uses the following words in her declaration; "De vray la reine m'a souvent dit que le roy mon mary estoit obligé à elle de sa vie, et que si ladite duchesse de Montpensier estoit en vie, elle lui en seroit témoin."

[3] Amboise Paré, the first surgeon of his day; born at Laval, and deceased in Paris, 1592.

of Condé, and urged the queen to grant a warrant for the safe apprehension of the king of Navarre. Catherine, better advised by the chancellor de l'Hôpital, and by madame de Montpensier, dismissed the cardinal de Lorraine with vague promises. The regency of the kingdom was again about to be contended for; the queen's favour could elevate Antoine to the highest honours in the realm, provided that he avowed himself obedient; the Guises, on the contrary, already established in the government, had arrogantly proclaimed their independence of her patronage. By the queen's directions, therefore, the chancellor de l'Hôpital found means to delay the execution of Condé; and Catherine meantime, summoned the king of Navarre to a private conference. Antoine found the queen bathed in tears, and attended only by the duchesse de Montpensier. In a few words, Catherine explained her position. Her son Charles, the future king, had just attained his tenth year;[1] she, therefore, demanded, from the king of Navarre, the renunciation of his pretensions to the regency.[2] She offered, in return, to nominate him lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and to publish all edicts in their joint names. "The queen promised king Antoine that he should become lieutenant-general of the king of France, and have the sole management of affairs of war; that he should first open all despatches relating to warlike measures; and that nothing, generally, should be ordained in the kingdom, without his

[1] Charles IX. was born at St. Germain-en-Laye in 1550.

[2] Hist. de l'état de France, Régnier de la Planche. p. 744. De Thou. Mathieu, Hist. de François II., t. iv.

advice and assent."[1] On the contrary, if the king refused her overtures, and persisted in claiming the regency, Catherine declared it to be her intention to espouse the party of Guise, as the duke and his brother had offered to support her claims, upon any conditions she was pleased to impose—and to exclude him forcibly from her son's counsels. Having been previously warned by madame de Montpensier, not to oppose the queen, if he desired to save his own life, and that of Condé, king Antoine, bewildered by the perils which surrounded him, tendered to Catherine his solemn renunciation in her favour of the regency.

On the 5th of December, the unfortunate young king, Francis II., expired, surrounded to the last by cabals. The dying prayer dictated to Francis, by the cardinal de Lorraine, was: "Lord! pardon my sins: and impute not to me, thy servant, the sin committed by my ministers, under my name and authority!"[2]

Thus terminated the celebrated assembly of Orleans. The funeral procession of the unfortunate Francis II. traversed, in gloomy majesty, the streets through which, scarcely six weeks previously, he had passed in the pomp of military *appareil*, intent on crushing heresy throughout his realm, by the cruel massacre of many of the best, and noblest of his subject. Catherine de Medici, and king Antoine remained arbiters of the destinies of France. The states were transferred from Orleans and its terrific reminiscences, to Pontoise. Condé, liberated from prison, retired to the castle of

[1] Montfaucon, Monuments de la Monarchie François, t. v. p. 92.
[2] La Place, Commentaires de l'Etat, p. 106.

Ham in Picardy. The duke de Guise betook himself for a brief season to his castle of Joinville, and the cardinal de Lorraine to his diocese of Metz. The widowed queen, Mary Stuart, who had abetted in everyway the violent counsels of her uncles, retired to Fontainebleau, where she spent her forty days of seclusion. She then joined her uncle the cardinal; and accompanied by him, she visited Nancy.

By the first day of the year, 1560, Jeanne d'Albret received the news of her husband's escape from the thraldom of his enemies. Antoine anxiously prayed his consort, with her children, to join him at St. Germain, as he needed her counsels, he then modestly averred to support his new dignities.[1] Queen Jeanne, therefore, quitted Navarreins, and proceeded to Pau. When there, she confided the government of the principality to d'Arros, and to the baron d'Audaux, sénéchal of Béarn; then with her two children, prince Henry and madame Catherine, she journeyed to Nérac, where, still distrustful of the designs of the court, she took up her abode until further tidings reached her from the king her husband.

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. 1.

CHAPTER V.

Queen Jeanne makes public avowal of her religion—Her distrust of the sincerity of the court—She makes donations to the Lutheran church within her dominions—Jeanne receives missives from Catherine de Medici—Queen Catherine proposes the betrothment of the princess of Navarre with the duke d'Anjou—Deportment of the king of Navarre—His intrigue with mademoiselle de Rouet—Queen Jeanne liberates the minister Brassier—Arrival of the queen in Paris—Intrigues of the Spanish ambassador, and of the Papal nuncio—Their designs against Jeanne d'Albret—Correspondence of Chantonnay, the Spanish Ambassador—Jeanne takes up her abode in the hotel de Condé—The king and queen of Navarre entertain the Danish ambassador—They remove from Paris to St. Germain—Conference between Theodore de Bèze and the cardinal de Lorraine—Caution of queen Catherine's proceedings—The last session of the states-general—Feud between the princes and the prelates of the realm—Discourse of queen Catherine to the assembly—Harangue of the queen of Navarre—Conferences of Poissy—Arrival of the cardinal Hippolyte d'Esté—His mission—The sovereigns of Navarre are present at the nuptials of the viscount de Rohan—Complimentary deportment of the cardinal of Ferrara towards Jeanne d'Albret—King Antoine's servile compliance with the suggestions of the Spanish ambassador—Prudent conduct of queen Jeanne—Return of her ambassador from Spain—Answer of Philip II. to the demands of Jeanne d'Albret—His private message to king Antoine—Chantonnay proposes to Antoine de Bourbon the divorce of his consort—Proposes an alliance between Mary Stuart and the king of Navarre—Coldness between

Catherine de Medici and Jeanne d'Albret—Its occasion—Personal appearance of the king of Navarre and his consort—Antoine attempts to compel his consort to attend mass—Her refusal—Menaces her with divorce—Her indignant reply—Her grief—Intrigues of Chantonnay—Negotiation for exchanging the claims of the house of Albret upon Upper Navarre for the island of Sardinia—Indignation of queen Jeanne—Coalition between Montmorency, the king of Navarre, and the duke de Guise—Objects of the Triumvirate—Correspondence of queen Jeanne with the viscount de Gourdon—Catherine de Medici exhorts Jeanne to be reconciled to her husband, by changing her faith—Reply made by the queen—Assumptions of Chantonnay, the Spanish ambassador—Departure of Coligny, and the chiefs of the reformed party from Paris—Disturbed condition of the kingdom—Turbulent proceedings of the Triumvirate—Departure of Catherine with her son for Fontainebleau—Jeanne demands permission to depart—Project for her arrest—She intimates her danger to Condé—Visits her son at St. Germain—Her resolute deportment—She departs from Paris—Her arrival at Vendome—She continues her journey to Châtelleraut—Her sojourn at Duras—Receives ambassadors from Guyenne—Her illness—She despatches envoys to mediate between the Protestants and the marshal de Montluc—Restores the count de Condale his liberty—Project of Montluc to surprise the queen at Caumont—Her flight across the frontier—Proceedings of the Triumvirate—Politic deportment of Catherine de Medici—Her letters to Condé—Despatch of one of Catherine's secretaries to the French ambassador at Madrid—Unpopularity of the king of Navarre—His conduct satirized in ballads and lampoons—Indignation felt by the public at his desertion of his consort.

QUEEN JEANNE possessed too much experience in politics implicitly to trust the new aspect of affairs at court. The ambitious daring of the princes of Lorraine, and the subtle wiles of queen Catherine justified this suspicion. United by so many bonds with the protestant community of France, Jeanne felt that her caution could not be too strongly exercised on the present emergency. The eagerness displayed by Catherine de Medici for her presence at St. Germain might

possibly be but a snare to draw her from her stronghold of Navarreins; while the gracious favour lavished by the queen-regent upon Antoine was probably bestowed with a view to the same object. Jeanne was well aware of the credulous confidence too frequently displayed by her consort: she was, also, perfectly cognizant of the fact that the strong garrisons and armed men of the principality of Béarn had contributed not a little to insure Antoine's comparative safety of person, during the late congress at Orleans. She felt, moreover, that her consort's dignity, and perhaps even his life, would be more secure whilst she remained at the head of a powerful force in the south: besides, Jeanne prudently determined not to expose the liberty, and the heritage of her son, until perfectly assured of Catherine's good faith.

By the advice of her council, Jeanne now determined to make a fearless and public avowal of her religious faith. This step answered two purposes: it tested the sincerity of the government, which Antoine intimated was prepared to tolerate reform in religion; secondly, at the commencement of a new reign, the juncture seemed propitious for the open profession of so great a princess. The queen, therefore, publicly received the Holy Communion, according to the reformed ritual, in the cathedral at Pau, before her departure for Nérac. As she passed through Condom, on her way to this latter place, Jeanne bestowed the Franciscan convent, which she found deserted by its inmates, on the Protestant community of Béarn, to found a college of theology. The queen made a similar donation to her subjects at Nérac, and presented

them with a spacious monastery, which she converted, at her own expense, into a church, combined with lodgings for the ministers.[1]

Soon after her arrival at Nérac, Jeanne received urgent letters from queen Catherine, pressing her to repair to court without delay; and proposing a project of betrothal, between the little madame Catherine, then in her fourth year, and Henry, duke d'Anjou. "This alliance, madame, ma bonne sœur, will render our union indissoluble," wrote the politic Catherine. She proceeds to assure Jeanne of her great desire to see her at court, with her children, whom Catherine calls "her own;" and she terminates the epistle, by assuring queen Jeanne that she cannot have a more affectionate and sincere relative than herself.[2] This letter, however, tended only to increase Jeanne's suspicions.

Meantime, the court had removed to Fontainebleau, after the departure thence of queen Mary Stuart. Catherine and the king of Navarre exercised an equal share of power; and, for some weeks, things proceeded smoothly, until the return of the duke de Guise. Coligny and the Huguenot leaders were now received by Catherine with gracious favour: ministers of every denomination flocked to the court; each great noble entertained there his favourite preacher; and animosities, arising from conflicting creeds, filled the palace with brawls. Catherine herself, accompanied by the young king, by the king of Navarre, and the duchesses de Mont-

1 Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t I. p. 165.
2 Ibid.

pensier and d'Usèz[1], attended the daily ministration of the eloquent bishop of Valence, Jean de Montluc. The papal nuncio, Prosper de Sainte Croix,[2] and the Spanish ambassador, Thomas de Chantonnay, wrote in most despairing language to their respective courts, on the license prevailing at Fontainebleau; from whence, in truth, all decorum on religious matters seems to have been dispensed with. "The day after Easter Sunday, the *prêches* which were publicly holden in the grand court of Fontainebleau, before the lodgings of the admiral de Coligny, the prince of Condé assisting thereat, have been forbidden; so that from henceforth, it is not lawful for any person here to have, or to hear other preachers when at court, excepting him who is appointed to officiate before the king, and the very Christian queen. God grant that this command may be observed!" wrote the Spanish ambassador.[3]

At the same time, the Papal nuncio preferred a formal complaint to queen Catherine, remonstrating on the levity of some of the courtiers, who had dressed up the young king in masquerade costume as a priest, with a mitre on his head. Catherine carelessly replied, "that what had been done was only a childish jest;

[1] Louise de Clermont, daughter of Bernardin, viscount de Tallart, and of Anne de Husson, countess de Tonnerre. She married, first, François, sieur du Bellay; secondly Antoine de Dacier, count de Crussol, first duke d'Uzès. The duchess d'Uzès was celebrated for her wit, beauty and learning, and she commanded great influence at the court of Catherine de Medici.

[2] Prospero de Santa Croce, cardinal-bishop of Chisamo, one of the most intriguing diplomatists of the age.

[3] Lettre de M. de Chantonnay, ambassadeur d'Espagne au roi catholique.—Mémoires de Condé, t. II. p. 5. Edition de M. de Secousse.

but as the Papal envoy made so great an affair of it, the thing should not happen again."[1]

The constable de Montmorency alone presumed, at this juncture, to uphold the ancient faith; and he boldly reproached the queen for the toleration which she accorded to heresy, within the precincts of the court, once so zealous and orthodox. Catherine replied, by assuring Montmorency, "that she still cherished the old faith, and was prepared to make any sacrifice to restore the religion of Rome to its ancient pre-eminence, provided that she could content the vacillating mind of her coadjutor in the government, king Antoine, whose defection would ensue, if she discountenanced reform."

She drew Montmorency's attention to the number and influence of the Protestants of France; she observed that a party which acknowledged for its leaders, the first prince of the blood, his consort, a sovereign princess, and the Colignis, nephews of the constable, merited some indulgence and consideration from the head of the state. To the reformed party at court, the queen, meantime, expressed satisfaction; she alluded often with shuddering horror to what she designated as the "iron sway of the Guisards," and she admonished the princes to promote friendly relations between herself and their followers, as the only method of defeating the projects of the Spanish and Papal courts. By thus conciliating both parties, it was Catherine's intention gradually to form a third faction, solely devoted to her

[1] Lettre du Nonce Prosper de St. Croix, au cardinal Charles Borroméo, t. 1. des Actes Ecclésiastiques Civils, et Synodaux par monsieur Aymon, p. 5. This letter is dated November 15, 1561.

own interests, armed with power formidable enough to defy opposition. The queen, nevertheless, took the very decided step of writing to Pius IV, demanding, amongst other things, that the images of the saints, and of the Virgin Mary should be removed from the churches throughout the realm; and that the holy communion might be administered in both kinds to the laity.[1] This demand excited great consternation at Rome; and the Spanish and Papal envoys received instructions to spare no efforts to sow dissension between the queen-regent, and the king of Navarre; and by dint of any promises and bribes to detach that very unstable prince from the reformed party.

Political dissensions were again resuming their ascendancy at the court of Catherine; and undignified contests between king Antoine and the duke de Guise, daily afforded mingled diversion and disgust to the courtiers. Antoine demeaned himself throughout these disputes with peevish querulousness: the duke, calm and imperturbable, treated his opponent with profound respect, and always appeared ready to tender any explanation likely to soothe the latter's irritation. Antoine found matter of offence in many of the duke's most harmless actions. If Catherine, smiled upon, or discoursed with the duke de Guise longer than Antoine thought meet, the fiery jealousy of the latter was sure to be evoked; and the queen had to put forth all her arts of persuasion to entice him back into more amiable mood.

The vagaries of Antoine's restless spirit, afforded

[1] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, liv. 28, p. 78. This letter is dated August 4, 1561.—Mém. de Condé.

infinite disquietude to Catherine de Medici; and impelled her to request the queen of Navarre, with much solicitude, no longer to delay her journey to the court. Jeanne's firmness of character, the queen trusted, would supply that want of rectitude in principle of which the king of Navarre was totally deficient. No dependence could be placed upon Antoine; his private conferences with Chantonnay and the nuncio, at times filled her with alarm; whilst, at other periods, the king's undisguised hostility towards these two redoubtable personages, offended them so greatly, that they threatened to demand their *congé*, and retire from France. Catherine, also, informed queen Jeanne, doubtless to the latter's infinite astonishment, of various negotiations which Antoine was engaged in with the king of Spain, for the recovery of the kingdom of Navarre; and she admonished Jeanne, that the king, duped by the promises made to him by Chantonnay, had actually proposed to cede the principality of Béarn to the crown of Spain, in exchange for the island of Sardinia, which was to be tendered and accepted in lieu of all other claims on the Spanish government. In fact, Catherine had to watch closely the proceedings of her coadjutor in the government; for this contemplated exchange was as repugnant to French interests, and to the queen-regent personally, as it could possibly be to Jeanne herself. A fragment of a curious despatch still exists, addressed by command of Catherine to de l'Aubespine, the French ambassador in Spain, directing him to take every method of discovering whether Antoine had seriously consented to such a proposal; and, if so, to frustrate the project:

"for, to speak the truth, the king of Navarre gives himself up to many designs, which those who love and honour him regret to perceive; and they therefore hold him to be badly advised."[1] The queen-regent ordered her ambassador to give every support to Antoine's fulsome supplications to king Philip that his wife's heritage might be restored; though he was directed to oppose the exchange. Queen Catherine added another powerful incentive to induce Jeanne to hasten to Paris. She apprized her that conferences were about to be opened at Poissy, between the Roman Catholic clergy of France, and twelve eminent ministers of the Reformed Church, at which her presence was indispensable. This resolution of inviting the reformed ministers to a controversy with their opponents, had been taken at a council holden after the coronation of the young king,[2] chiefly at the instigation of the cardinal de Lorraine, who flattered himself that his eloquence and learning, in expounding the doctrines of the church, would greatly contribute to the extirpation of the Lutheran heresy. Jeanne, moreover, received private advices that the conjugal faith of king Antoine presented any aspect rather than an edifying one to the court; and that his attentions to Catherine's beautiful maid of honour, mademoiselle du Rouet,[3] had become a matter of public comment and censure.

[1] M.S. Bibl. Royale. F. de l'Aubespine Villebon.—Inedited.

[2] Charles IX. was crowned at Rheims by the cardinal de Lorraine, on Ascension Day, May 15, 1561.

[3] Louise de la Beraudière, daughter of Louis de la Beraudière de la Guiche, seigneur de l'Isle Rouet en Poitou. Louise was distinguished at the court of Catherine by the name of *la belle de Rouet*. After the death of the king of Navarre, she espoused M. de Combault, to whom she bore two daughters.

The queen, therefore, reluctantly resolved to proceed to Paris. Before she quitted Nérac, Jeanne wrote to her faithful friend, the viscount de Gourdon, to inform him of her intent, and of the proposed conferences at Poissy,—a project, which the queen hailed with enthusiasm, as she states, "for the peace of the realm, and for her own better instruction in the faith of the reformed." The queen probably quitted Nérac about the end of July, or the beginning of August, 1561. She was accompanied by her two children, and by a numerous suite of ladies and cavaliers; her chaplain, Jean de la Tour, followed his royal mistress. Jeanne had intended that la Tour should take a prominent part in the *Colloque de Poissy;* but the presence of Théodore de Bèze, who was appointed, with acclamation by the churches, to the honourable office of defending the reformed faith against the assaults of its two ardent opponents, the cardinals de Tournon and de Lorraine, frustrated her intent.

At Perigueux, Jeanne liberated the minister Brassier, who had been thrown into prison at the suit of the canons of the cathedral in that town, for his advocacy of reform. Jeanne somewhat mischievously committed him to the charge of these said churchmen who had cast him into prison, telling them that on her return she should demand Brassier at their hands.

From Perigueux the queen travelled rapidly to Paris. Her arrival was dreaded by the Spanish factions in the capital. They feared, lest the queen's penetration might bring their sinister designs to light. Her rectitude, they knew, was irreproachable; and her intellect too

keen to permit them to hope that she also could be deluded with facility. Guided by the counsels of his consort, they apprehended that king Antoine would detect their projects, which tended to establish the omnipotence of the pope, and the king of Spain, over the counsels of France. Dark and mysterious does the chain of Spanish politics become, after the arrival of Jeanne d'Albret in Paris, and very far could the latter have been from divining the anguish which would smite her, ere she retraced her steps to the sunny heritage of her ancestors.

To the Spanish ambassador de Chantonnay, and to the Papal nuncio, the cardinal Prospero de Santa Croce, was assigned the conduct of the intrigue, the object of which was to separate Jeanne d'Albret from her husband; to procure from the feeble Antoine a recantation of his Calvinistic heresy, and to promote his union with the Guises, and the consequent triumph of the Romish faith. It is a curious circumstance that these two famed political agents of Philip II, have left on record in their letters a full avowal of the unprincipled part which they took in aggravating the political difficulties of the times. Chantonnay inherited the sagacity, and more than the astute daring of his father, the chancellor Nicholas de Granvelle: Santa Croce, the Papal nuncio, was a prelate of cunning and intriguing genius, plausible, and excelling in the art of courtly parlance, calculated in every way to attract the fastidious approval of a prince, who like Antoine de Bourbon judged exclusively of individuals and circumstances by their outward bearing. The known inflexibility of Jeanne's character,

and her argumentative turn of mind rendered it hopeless to expect that, in passive unconsciousness, she would aid the scheme to restore the Guises to their former power over the realm: indeed, the idea never seems to have been entertained; but her destruction was all along coolly resolved. It is a matter of historical enquiry whether Catherine de Medici was privy to the projects of Philip's cabal; or whether the queen-regent, finding that she had herself been duped, eventually gave her countenance to the strongest party, and that with such consummate address, as to appear even, to the chief actors concerned, never to have differed from them in design.

Chantonnay, when he has occasion to mention the king and queen of Navarre in his despatches, gives them the title of "Monsieur et madame de Vendôme." He makes the following comment on the arrival of the queen of Navarre at Paris: "Madame de Vendôme arrived here a few days since; she continues to live after her own peculiar fashion, in which she is resolved to make no change."[1] In another letter, Philip's ambassador hazards many acrimonious remarks on the sectarian spirit pervading the court, which had suffered no abatement in consequence of the edict, lately promulgated.[2] "The heretic faith goes on in its accustomed routine," writes the Spanish ambassador, "we

[1] Lettre de M. de Chantonnay, au conseiller Tisnacq.—Mém. de Condé, t. II. This letter is dated, de St. Cloud, le 6ème de Septembre, 1561.

[2] This edict, against the holding of public assemblies by the Huguenots, was published at the demand of the Spanish court, July, 1561.

have always a *prêche* going on in the apartments of some lord or lady of the court, *quelque chose que j'en crye.* The upshot of my remonstrances is always that no one knows anything of the matter, but that enquiry shall be made."

Queen Jeanne took up her abode, while in Paris, in the hotel de Condé, rue de Grenelle, and declined the pressing invitation of the queen-regent that she would accept of lodgings in the Louvre. When the queen with her consort appeared a few days subsequently on the Pré-aux-Clercs, then the fashionable promenade of Paris, she was received with acclamations by the populace.

Soon after her arrival in Paris, Jeanne and Antoine entertained the Danish ambassador Gluck, at a banquet given in the hotel de Condé. Polemics mingled then in discourse even during the most convivial meetings; and king Antoine took this opportunity to assure the ambassador, at the instigation, it is said, of the queen, his consort, that ere many months elapsed, the pure faith of the bible should alone be preached at court. This unguarded observation was repeated to the nuncio, and gave great offence to that eminent personage.[1]

During the first week in August, the king and queen of Navarre accompanied the court to St. Germain-en-Laye. Catherine proceeded thither for the double purposes of dissolving the states-general which were holding their last session at Poissy; and to convoke the congress of prelates, and ministers summoned to confer

[1] De Thou, liv. 27.

upon matters of religion. The secret, meantime, of the proposed conferences was carefully concealed; and by Catherine's command every method was taken to prevent the details of the project from reaching the ears of the pope. The greatest distrust was manifested by the court of Spain and that of Rome, relative to the designs of the regent. The frequent interviews between Catherine and the queen of Navarre were justly viewed with extreme jealousy; and the firm yet politic deportment of the former, at this crisis, afforded evidence that she was yielding to the guidance of a mind which rejected the wiles of tortuous diplomacy, her own usual resource.

On the 23rd of August, Théodore de Bèze arrived at St. Germain,[1] where the principal prelates of the realm had assembled in readiness to present their ecclesiastical report to the sovereign, previous to the prorogation of the states. The day following, Bèze preached before the court, in the apartments of Condé. At midnight he received a summons to repair privately to the presence chamber of the queen of Navarre. He was there received by Jeanne d'Albret, queen Catherine, the king of Navarre, Condé, the cardinals de Bourbon and de Lorraine, the duke d'Estampes, and the duchesses de Montpensier and d'Uzès.[2] A conference then ensued between the great reformer and the cardinal de Lorraine, in the presence of the above illustrious personages. The

[1] The colleagues of De Bèze were the ministers Saules, Marlorat, Pierre Martyn, Jean de l'Espine, Claude d'Espence, Merlin and others.

[2] Thé. de Bèze—Hist. des Eglises Réformées de France, t. 1. p. 392.

subtle and refined eloquence of the cardinal was greatly praised by Bèze, who, however, qualified his admiration by commending its ingenuity, while avowing himself still unconvinced by its argument. The cardinal replied: "It gives me great content to have seen and conferred with you. I adjure you, in God's name, that we frequently renew our conference in order that I may hear your statements, and you mine. You will then acknowledge that I am not so black as I have been represented to you." "In such case," promptly observed the duchess d'Uzès, addressing queen Catherine, "we ought to have paper and ink here, in order that monseigneur may sign that admission. To-morrow, he will publish quite a different statement respecting the conference." This assertion, despite its apparent harshness, was nevertheless verified; for, after the conference, the cardinal ostentatiously proclaimed that he had totally vanquished Bèze at the outset of their argument. The constable de Montmorency, was so transported with joy at this news, that he presented himself at Catherine's *lever* to congratulate her; but the queen very gravely assured him that his triumph was premature; for that, on the contrary, the reformer had acquitted himself with the utmost ability during the conference.[1]

As the period fixed for the public debates between the prelates and the ministers approached, Catherine renewed her care that no information of her proceedings should reach Rome. Couriers, who were suspected of conveying inconvenient revelations from the country were arrested, and their despatches detained. "These

[1] Hist. des Cinq Roys, p. 137.

few last days, a courier despatched to the pope by his nuncio here, was arrested near to Turin, by command of the government, and detained four days," wrote the ambassador Chantonnay, in high indignation.[1] "All his despatches were opened and read, even to the smallest letter. My letters were also read. All the letters addressed to private persons were finally restored to the courier; but those written by the nuncio, and by myself, were brought back again to Paris. This is the gratitude shown by the queen, and by monsieur de Vendôme, for the favours conferred on the said sieur by the pope, and the friendship his holiness has demonstrated towards the young king. I fully expect that, one of these days, my own despatches for Flanders, or even for Spain, will be thus detained; and, if the king endures it, they will do even worse. However, I leave all to the consideration of his Catholic majesty!"

On the 27th day of August, the states-general, convoked by Francis II., to meet in the town of Orleans, closed their session at Poissy. The king, with his mother, and the king and queen of Navarre proceeded in state to the Hall of Assembly, to receive the *résumé* of the matters discussed by the three estates of the realm, during their stormy deliberations. The princes of the blood, headed by Condé, took this opportunity to dispute precedence with the cardinals: as the lieutenant-general of the realm professed Lutheran tenets, and the queen-regent declared herself favourably disposed towards reform in the church, the result of this feud

[1] Lettre de Chantonnay, au conseiller Tisnacq.—Mém. de Condé, t. II. p. 17.

was that the cardinals had to cede the *pàs* to the princes. The cardinals de Lorraine, de Tournon, and de Guise, refusing to comply with the royal mandate, retired from the assembly; the cardinals de Bourbon, de Châtillon, and d'Armagnac, however, consented to lead the procession of prelates. The clergy, dreading the general odium which had befallen their order, essayed to propitiate the regent, by voting a subsidy of fifteen millions of livres. Catherine, in return, thanked the clergy for their aid, in a speech of great dexterity. She promised that the Roman faith should be maintained throughout the realm, and the privileges of the hierarchy sûffer no diminution; although, in refutation of this, her majesty's statement, the prelates might have appealed from her words to her recent decision respecting their precedence before the princes. When the Tiers-Etat presented itself before the sovereigns, Catherine replied to the remonstrances addressed to her, respecting the dissolute morals and the rapacity of the Romish clergy, by engaging that the reformed doctrines should be allowed full toleration throughout the realm; she even carried her dissimulation so far, as to assure the deputies that she would cause the young king and his brothers to be brought up in that belief. By this declaration, however, Catherine defeated her subtle calculations. The queen's words roused the bigotted ire of the partisans of the popedom. Chantonnay, the nuncio Ste. Croix, and the constable, quoted Catherine's own words as the basis of their subsequent appeal to the upholders of the ancient faith, to defeat the machinations of the sectarian party.

When Catherine had separately addressed the three estates of the realm, the king of Navarre pronounced an harangue in presence of the united assembly. Jeanne d'Albret, it is recorded, then made, in her turn, an oration, which was received with great applause. It is difficult to divine under what pretext queen Jeanne addressed the states; nevertheless, with her usual judgment, the queen of Navarre said what was required from her, and no more. Even the nuncio, Ste. Croix, finds applause for the "heretic queen," in his admiration of her capacity. "Two days ago, the assembly of the states-general closed," writes the nuncio, in one of his celebrated epistles.[1] "It is commonly reported that the chancellor propounded his sentiments with so much moderation, that, to listen to him then, he might readily have been taken for another individual. The king and queen of Navarre addressed the assembly last. That princess stated her opinions with such force and facility, that it is said, never has any orator before expressed himself with greater eloquence, or with more energy and success." It was precisely, however, because she possessed these talents, that Jeanne was singled out as the object of the most bitter persecution; and it proved little consolation to the queen, that her enemies thus admired, whilst they oppressed her.

The conferences of Poissy, meantime, opened on the 9th of September. Jeanne accompanied the court, and was present at all the public disputations. She sat on the *haut-dais*, having the princess Marguerite on her

[1] Lettre du nonce, Prosper de Ste. Croix, au cardinal Borroméo, t. 1. Actes synodaux de France.

right hand. Queen Catherine and the young king occupied chairs of state on the platform, which was magnificently draped with purple velvet.[1] The pope alarmed at the threatening aspect of affairs in France, hastily nominated a legate to proceed thither on a special mission to co-operate with the Spanish envoy; but, ostensibly, to congratulate the king on his accession. The prelate chosen by Pius, was the cardinal Hyppolite d'Este, uncle of the duchess de Guise; "an ambitious churchman, who, born of Lucrezia Borgia, daughter of Pope Alexander VI, appeared to have inherited the character of his grandfather, and that of Cæsar, duke de Valentinois his uncle," says the historian Galluzzi.[2]

The cardinal of Ferrara gloried in the repute of being one of the master spirits of that corrupt diplomacy which deems every subterfuge lawful, so that the end aimed at, is accomplished. "I have always found it advisable," says the cardinal of Ferrara, "to bend to the times, and to the exigencies of the period; not to precipitate affairs, is the method most likely to achieve them, and proves generally a much more efficacious plan than a violent decision. I have most thoroughly realized this, and can assuredly assert that having hitherto laboured in all gentleness and moderation, I have profited much more than others with their haste, and threatening deportment. Nevertheless, I also have acted with wily diplomacy, and in secret, when it

[1] See, Montfaucon, Monuments de la Monarchie Française, t. v.

[2] Istoria del Granducato, t. i. p. 195.

was necessary; and I have proved to all that I never slumber at my post.[1]

The mission confided to this subtle prelate, was to detach Antoine de Bourbon from the Huguenot party; to bring over the queen of Navarre to the Romish communion; or failing which, to procure her divorce from her husband, and her dethronement. This accomplished, it was farther planned to arraign Jeanne before the tribunal of the inquisition, as a contumacious heretic. The king of Spain held the tempting bribe, the kingdom of Navarre—which was to lure Antoine through his lust of power, from his duty to his consort, and his defence of the reformation in France. Having once avowed herself a member of the protestant communion, they knew that queen Jeanne would not retract: on this, her firm refusal, they relied for the accomplishment of their political schemes.

On Michaelmas-day, 1561, the king and queen of Navarre were present at the marriage of M. de Rohan,[2] cousin-german to the queen, with Diane de Barbançon, niece of the duchesse d'Estampes, the once powerful favourite of Francis I. The marriage was celebrated at Argenteuil, by Théodore de Bèze, according to the reformed ritual. The prince de Condé, and Coligny, and his brothers, were likewise present. This affair greatly excited the displeasure and uneasiness of the legate,

[1] Négociations diverses d'Hyppolite d'Esté, cardinal de Ferrara, p. 3.

[2] Jean de Rohan, seigneur de Frontenay, second son of Réné, viscount de Rohan, and of Isabel d'Albret, aunt of queen Jeanne. He was killed at the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Diane de Barbançon, his wife, was the daughter of Michel de Barbançon, seigneur de Cany and of Peronne de Pisseleu, eldest sister of the duchess d'Estampes.

who had looked upon the king as already half won. The cardinal of Ferrara, however, ascribed the blame to the wilful obstinacy of Jeanne d'Albret, who, regardless of the high authority to which her consort had attained, compelled him to make so public a demonstration of his preference for reform.

Jeanne, soon after her arrival at Paris, accredited an ambassador, the sieur d'Ozance, to proceed to Madrid, and demand from Philip II, the restitution of her kingdom of Upper Navarre. D'Ozance was furnished by Catherine with letters to the French ambassador, and to Philip himself, wherein the queen expressed her desire that the conquered heritage of the house of Albret might be restored. Charles IX indited one of the earliest letters written by him now extant, to his sister Elizabeth, Philip's youthful consort, praying her to intercede with her husband, that he would grant the prayer of the sovereigns of Béarn. The Spanish cabinet, however, had other designs; for the articles of the league of Peronne prescribed its line of action. Already the king of Navarre listened with complacent attention to the wily suggestions of the nuncio—that neither grace nor justice could he and his consort expect from the hands of the catholic king, whilst they countenanced heresy. "The sieur de Vendôme," wrote Chantonnay at this period,[1] "appears more favourably inclined towards the Catholic religion. If the king (of Spain) will only give him hope, we shall yet gain him over, which will be a thing most

[1] Lettre de M. de Chantonnay à M. de Tisnacq.—Mém. de Condé t. II. p. 20.

advantageous for Christendom." The cardinal of Ferrara was, meantime, paying assiduous court to Jeanne d'Albret: during his visits to her apartments at St. Germain, he even tolerated the presence of Bèze and other ministers in her suite. One day, he carried his compliance so far as to propose to the queen to be present with her at Bèze's sermon, provided that she, in return, would attend a mass celebrated by Ste. Croix, during which the nuncio was to preach. Jeanne smiled, and accepted the proposition; the cardinal, thereupon, to the amazement of the court, escorted the queen to Condé's apartments, and patiently remained to the end of the sermon.[1] This politic overture is stated to have been tendered by the legate at the instigation of the cardinal de Tournon. The king of Navarre hastened to express to Ste. Croix, his appreciation of the cardinal's condescension; at the same time, he took the opportunity of requesting that prelate's intercession with Philip, for the restoration of Navarre. "The king of Navarre," wrote Ste. Croix, satirically,[2] "requested me to observe that his ministers, though he retains a good number in his household, have ceased, by his command, to speak against the authority of his holiness, or to say anything that might offend. I profited by this opening, to beseech his majesty that he would be pleased to give such commands, that these said ministers might not be suffered to preach again; representing to his majesty, how very agreeable and

[1] Lettre du nonce, Prosper de Ste. Croix, au cardinal Borroméo. Aymon, Actes synodaux de France.

[2] Ibid—Lettre 2.

pleasant to his holiness such a decision would be." The proposition of the wily nuncio was evaded in some confusion by Antoine, who knew too well his consort's determination of character, to pledge himself to a proceeding, which he was aware she would not sanction.

The intrigues of the cardinal de Ferrara, meantime, gained over Descars, principal chamberlain to Antoine, and the bishop of Auxerre,[1] a prelate whose luxury and ostentatious mode of life had recommended him to the friendship of the king. By the advice of Lainez, general of the Jesuits, who had accompanied the cardinal of Ferrara to France, Antoine took, as his physician in ordinary, one Vincent Lauro, a Calabrian by birth, notwithstanding the expostulations of his consort. These men continually irritated the mind of Antoine, by their invidious representations; they feigned to deplore the little influence he possessed over the party for which he had sacrificed so much; but, which, in reality, regarded Condé as its head. They commented, in daring language, on what they presumed to term the "obstinate heresy" of Jeanne d'Albret; and they commiserated Antoine, for his subserviency to the will of so hard and imperious a woman. Lauro failed not to play his part in these proceedings; he terrified his royal patron by vivid descriptions of the eternal pains that awaited the contumacious heretic; and he offered to become the medium of Antoine's secret communications with the subtle Spanish diplomatist, Chantonnay.

Jeanne d'Albret conducted herself with consummate

[1] Philippe de Lénoncourt.

prudence during these *tracasseries*, though beset by snares. Confiding in no individual of the dissolute court, she preserved an impenetrable reserve. In vain the supple cardinal de Ferrara sought to insinuate himself into her favour; she received him with courteous grace; but he gained nothing from his daily visits to her apartments. Indeed, the cardinal's attentions began to excite wonder and suspicion; the rumour of them even reached Rome, and drew from the sovereign pontiff a severe censure on the legate's *complaisance*, in having appeared with Jeanne d'Albret at Bèze's *prêche*. Ste. Croix, however, wrote to Rome, in defence of the legate's tactics; he says, "I find myself compelled to remark, that the threatened departure of monsieur le legat from hence, would so essentially damage the interest of our religion, that if his eminence were even at Constantinople, my advice would be, that he should be promptly summoned thence."[1] The legate excused himself to the sovereign pontiff, for his courteous deference towards Jeanne, by explaining that he assisted at the obnoxious *prêche*, on purpose to recommend himself to the favour of the sovereigns of Navarre, in order that, from that confidence, salutary effects might ensue.

The ambassador, meantime, whom Jeanne despatched to the court of Spain, returned, bearing Philip's reply to the queen's demand. The sieur d'Ozance was admitted to a personal audience of the king, at the intercession of the young queen Elizabeth. Philip's

[1] Lettre du nonce, Prosper de Ste. Croix. Aymon, Actes synodaux de France, t. I.

answer was to the effect, "that, if the sovereigns of Béarn wished for the restitution of Navarre, they must, in the first place, declare war to the death against heretics; in proof of which, Antoine de Bourbon, in his capacity of lieutenant-general and co-regent, must subdue and punish, for their heresy, Condé, his brother, and the princes of the house of Châtillon."[1] The nuncio, Ste. Croix, was commissioned, at the same time, secretly to wait upon the king of Navarre, and to inform his majesty, "that if he achieved some notable deed, tending to the glory of God, and the maintenance of the true religion, his catholic majesty promised, on the word of a king, to bestow upon him, out of favour, and not by way of right or reward, so good a compensation in the Low Countries, or in Italy, as would give him ample satisfaction."

At this conference, the nuncio, and the Spanish ambassador, unfolded to Antoine their perfidious design relative to Jeanne d'Albret. After commenting, with subtle casuistry, on the queen's defiant attitude, and her resolute refusal to attend mass, Chantonnay exhorted Antoine to rid himself of a consort whose prejudices impeded his political advancement. The nuncio then added, that a suit to Rome, for the dissolution of the marriage, founded on the plea of Jeanne's precontract with the duke of Cleves, would probably be received with approbation by his holiness. Ste. Croix proceeded to tempt the credulous Antoine, by promising, in the name of the Holy See, to negotiate his marriage

[1] Lettre du nonce, Prosper de Ste. Croix. Aymon, Actes synodaux de France, t. I—Lettre 4ème.

with Mary Stuart, whose relatives of the house of Guise were really, he asserted, to promote the alliance, provided that the king of Navarre abandoned his connexion with the Calvinistic faction. The Spanish ambassador then commented on the glorious future, which a frank reconciliation with the church revealed for Antoine. He added, that the triple crowns of England, Scotland, and Navarre, would form a royalty worthy to be accepted by the first French prince of the blood. To such cogent arguments, these delectable diplomatists added others, which, they trusted, might prove equally dazzling. They hinted, that the catholic king would willingly see the regency conferred upon Antoine de Bourbon, and queen Catherine deposed from her dominion, to become the tutoress only of the king's person, during his minority. Finally, they exhorted the king of Navarre to accomplish his reconciliation with the Holy See, seeing that three princes only, of tender years and failing health, stood between himself and the throne of France. Antoine listened to these expostulations without surprise or repugnance. Instead of repelling the evil counsellors, who incited him to do such cruel wrong to his consort, he presently demanded, "how, in the event of his assent to this measure, could Navarre be secured to him; as he held that crown only in right of queen Jeanne?" Ste. Croix replied, that the sovereign pontiff was not only ready to annul his marriage with Jeanne d'Albret, but, also, to declare that princess deprived of her dominions, for the crime of heresy, and to confer the principality of Béarn upon himself. Antoine, then, with all the appearance of

being much disturbed in mind, requested a few days to consider the proposal, promising, meantime, inviolable secrecy on the matter.

The queen of Navarre, against whom this dark intrigue was directed, continued to live almost isolated at the court. She had adopted the Reformed tenets from principle; Antoine de Bourbon from expediency, being prompted by that craving vanity which induced him, during the late reign, to accept the title of chief of the Calvinistic faction, rather than remain comparatively obscure. The colloque de Poissy, meantime, had terminated without favourable results; the disputants, as in most cases of controversial strife, commenced by contradiction of each other, and ended by personal abuse. Théodore de Bèze, and the other ministers, excepting La Tour, Jeanne's private chaplain, had quitted St. Germain in high indignation at the vacillating conduct of king Antoine. A slight coldness had arisen between Jeanne and the queen-regent, on account of an anonymous sonnet, which was published after the closing of the conferences at Poissy, in which the writer exhorted the queen of Navarre, to lead Catherine and her son to a knowledge of true religion; an insinuation which greatly piqued the regent. In these lines, Jeanne was told more emphatically than gracefully,—

"Il vous fault à la Roine et à son fils aussi
Ouvrir les vrais trésors de l'escripture-saincte;
Puis la France affranchir de ces pipeurs cagots,
Qui s'engressoyent d'abus, à l'ombre des fagots,
Souillants l'honneur de Dieu de farces et de feintes!"[1]

[1] Mém. de Condé, t. II, p. 517.

The primary defect of Jeanne's character was the uncompromising indifference which she manifested towards those whose actions deserved disapprobation. She seldom attempted the gracious medium of conciliation; but, rigid in her appreciation of right, she remained aloof, and suffered the intrigues of those around her to work their own result, unheeded, apparently, by herself. When Jeanne d'Albret was roused to remonstrance, her words fell swiftly, and with telling force on the culprit's ear, with weight corresponding to her indignation. At the present juncture, her reproaches kindled the utmost exasperation in the mind of Antoine de Bourbon. He fled from his consort's eloquent appeals; and resented the assertions which he was powerless to disprove. The public homage which the king of Navarre thought proper to offer, in the presence of his consort, to Catherine's beautiful maid of honour, mademoiselle de Rouet, added another insult to the many heaped upon the queen by her husband, at this season. One of the most successful of the artifices resorted to by the queen-regent, was to subjugate the unruly spirit of her warriors and nobles, by potent spells, woven by her fair attendants. The behests of Catherine were usually obeyed with scrupulous minuteness; and when, on the arrival of the king of Navarre at Orleans, mademoiselle de Rouet was directed by her royal mistress to put forth her utmost fascinations to detain and amuse him, the queen was only too well obeyed. The result of her criminal intrigue with the king of Navarre, was a son,[1] born a few weeks prior to

[1] Charles de Bourbon, afterwards bishop of Comminges, and archbishop of Roue.

the arrival of Jeanne d'Albret at the French court. The nuncio, Ste. Croix, and Philip's ambassador, Chantonnay, in pursuance of their unscrupulous designs, inspired mademoiselle de Rouet with the delusive hope of becoming Antoine's lawful consort, provided that she aided in preparing the mind of the king to assent to the repudiation of queen Jeanne, whom they considered as the chief obstacle to Antoine's secession from the Reformed party. Mademoiselle de Rouet, therefore, in the arrogance of her power over the feeble mind of Antoine de Bourbon, indulged, in his presence, in all manner of insolent invective relative to the queen: she fearlessly branded her as a heretic; uttering flippant comments on the sedate gravity of Jeanne's deportment; while she conducted herself with reprehensible levity when present before the queen of Navarre, in the circle of the regent.

The Venetian ambassador, Giovanni Michieli, resident at this period at the court of Catherine de Medici, gives the following description of Antoine's personal appearance. "The king of Navarre," writes the ambassador, "is now between forty-four and forty-five years of age. His beard is getting grey; his demeanour is much more imposing than that of his brothers, whose stature is low, and their figure awkward. The king is tall, robust, and well made; and his courage in battle is highly lauded; though he is rather a good soldier, than a skilful general."[1]

The king is represented as a great coxcomb in his

[1] Tommasio, Relation des ambassadeurs Vénitiens sur les affaires de France, au 16ème. siècle.

attire; he being marvellously fond of gorgeous robes and jewels. All the portraits of Antoine portray him arrayed in a dress puffed, slashed and adorned in the most approved fashion of the age. His hair is carefully frizzed and curled; and his plumed chapeau, beset with rich gems, his sword-knot and gloves, evidence the care and taste of the most complete *petit maître.*

Another ambassador sent by the Venetian Senate, comments, in wonder, on the number of goodly rings, and rich ear-rings, worn by the king of Navarre. Jeanne d'Albret is described as a woman of serene and stately presence, with a fresh complexion, dark hair, and eyes very large and melancholy in expression.

At this period, the queen had only completed her thirty-third year; sorrow was Jeanne's heritage; and it had long ago subdued the buoyant spirit of her youth. The atmosphere of love and sympathy had never swept with cheering influence over the character of Jeanne d'Albret. Endowed with genius for command, Jeanne's mind was divested of many of its feminine attributes by the philosophical bias of her education; while her girlhood was spent in solitary state at Plessis-les-Tours, surrounded by objects and reminiscences calculated to harden the mind and to induce self-control. The disposition, therefore, of queen Jeanne partook of the stern discipline of her earlier years; so that she was enabled beneath a composed and even frigid demeanour, to hide the anxiety which usually oppressed her.

The effect of the insidious counsel of the nuncio, was soon perceptible in the conduct of the king of Navarre; he became moody, perverse, and exacting.

By the advice of the cardinal de Ste. Croix, and of Louise de Rouet, Antoine displayed the greatest coldness towards his consort; and even threatened to deprive her of her children. The bribe of an independent kingdom, was constantly held towards Antoine by Chantonnay, and his unprincipled coadjutors; and Jeanne d'Albret was represented by them as the sole obstacle to his aggrandizement. When Catherine issued a command, requiring all the ladies of the court to attend mass, and to forbear from introducing theological discussions into their private converse, the king of Navarre, to demonstrate to the Guises and the nuncio that he lived not under the dominion of his consort, insisted that Jeanne should likewise comply with the mandate. The volatile and inconsistent Antoine even ventured to try compulsion; and it is recorded that one day when Jeanne was about to step into her litter to attend the *prêche* of one of the ministers, Antoine presented himself, and taking the queen by the hand, he led her back to her apartments, and commanded the litter to be dismissed. He next proceeded to signify his express commands that she should no more attend the services of the Calvinist ministers; but outwardly conform in all things to the worship of the Roman Catholic Church. Jeanne coldly replied, "that it was not her purpose to barter her immortal soul for territorial aggrandizement, and that she would not be present at mass, or at any ceremony of the Romish Church whatever."

Perhaps, had the queen shown a more docile spirit, Antoine might have been diverted from the unworthy course he meditated. Exasperated by his wife's con-

temptuous firmness, the king avowed the plot in agitation against her; and threatened unless she paid implicit obedience to his commands, to sue for divorce. Indignation sealed the queen's lips for some minutes; then tears, wrung from the depths of Jeanne's proud heart, fell from her eyes. The scorn which she felt for the contemptible prince before her, who, in addition to the foul wrong he threatened, boasted of his intention to despoil her of the inheritance of her ancestors, presently restored Jeanne to composure. With burning eloquence, the queen descanted on his treacherous *liaison* with the legate, and with the Papal nuncio, which she characterized as dishonourable and treasonable; she warned him that their object was his own degradation, and the elevation of his hereditary enemies, the princes of the house of Guise, to supreme power over the realm, "and for this purpose, monseigneur, to overthrow you, it is that they seek to embroil you with Condé, with the admiral and with his party." She continued then to assure king Antoine, that it was not her purpose to abandon her dominions to the rapacity of her foes; and that she knew how to hold, by the aid of her true subjects, the royal state conferred upon her by God. Referring then to the infamous project of divorce, with which he had menaced her, queen Jeanne exclaimed; "Monseigneur, although my fate does not move you, at least have mercy upon your two children. Know you not that this repudiation of their mother, while consummating her ruin, will also destroy them! that they will be branded as bastards! They, your children! The fruit of a holy union re-

cognized by men, upon which God bestowed his benediction, and the legitimacy of which is now only questioned by our mutual enemies![1]

Under the blind delusion of passion, Antoine had never contemplated the obvious fact brought before him by his consort. Her reasoning seemed to move him; and he sullenly replied, "that such being the case, she had better, by her prompt compliance with his will, and by her consequent reconciliation with the courts of Rome and Spain, render that step unnecessary; as for himself, he was still undecided which religion was the true one; but that whilst his incertitude continued, he was minded to follow the faith of his fathers."[2]

Jeanne d'Albret might have recalled to his mind the early days of their first rule over Béarn, when his imprudent zeal for the cause of reform, drew forth her serious remonstrance, and had exposed the principality to imminent peril of invasion. "Well then," replied Jeanne vehemently, in reply to her consort's last observation, "if you entertain equal doubts, monseigneur, on the subject of both religions, I beseech you, adopt at least, the one likely to do you the smallest prejudice!"

The king of Navarre made no reply, but instantly quitted the apartment, to report his progress to the intriguing junta without, who were doubtless waiting with eagerness to learn how queen Jeanne had received his unfeeling announcement.

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret. t. I. p. 199.
[2] Ibid, p. 196.

In solitude, however, Jeanne indulged the anguish which oppressed her. She was sincerely attached to Antoine, despite the many wrongs, and the slights which she had received at his hands. Too proud to complain, she had witnessed in indignant silence his devotion to mademoiselle de Rouet; but not the less bitterly did she mourn his alienation. During the few subsequent days after her interview with Antoine, Jeanne seems to have lived in seclusion; doubtless her grief was too poignant to enable her to bear unmoved the curious scrutiny of the court, and the hypocritical homage of the cardinal de Ferrara and his colleagues. Chantonnay instantly forwarded a despatch to Madrid announcing the *fracas* between the royal pair; he says: "Madame de Vendôme has been compelled by her husband to forego her *prêches;* there are now no sermons permitted in her apartments at the castle of St. Germain; the which causes grief and astonishment to many. Madame de Crussol, madame l'Admirale, and the bishop of Valence, and such like personages, cease not to importune the queen with their accustomed pernicious wickedness to restore them."[1]

Total alienation seems to have subsisted from this period between Jeanne and her husband; the queen vehemently insisted on her right to retire into Béarn and to take her two children. Antoine, at one time, seems to have assented to her desire, doubtless feeling glad to be relieved from his consort's presence. The cardinal de Ferrara did all in his power to widen this domestic strife. In a letter written by that subtle pre-

[1] Lettre de M. de Chantonnay—Mém. de Condé, t. xi.

late to the cardinal Charles Borroméo he owns his share in the design for separating the royal pair. "The king of Navarre, on purpose to give me a certain proof that his dispositions are good respecting religion, told me a few days ago that he designed to send the queen, his wife, home to Béarn, under the plea that affairs required her presence there, and that she had testified to him her willingness to depart. However, since then, things have changed their aspect, and she does not yet go, whether on account of the rigour of the season, or her own failing health, I know not. The king (of Navarre), nevertheless, is very firmly resolved to send her back early in the spring: for my part, I shall not fail, you may feel assured, to contribute with all my power to the achievement of either of these designs."[1]

Probably, ill and broken-hearted Jeanne delayed her journey to make one more effort to reclaim her faithless consort. Antoine alluded less frequently to his intent to espouse Mary Stuart;[2] perhaps Mary herself may have sent him the same indignant denial which she gave to Damville, the constable's second son, who was

[1] Négociations, ou Lettres politiques d'Hippolyte d'Esté, cardinal de Ferrare, p. 11.

[2] The Protestant writers satirized this design of the king of Navarre in the following lines,

"Cependant par cautele, et mille beaux portraits
Qu'on apporte à propos, on lui grave les traits,
La grace, et la beauté de la Reine d'Escosse,
Jeune, fraische, gentille, afin que par la nôce
Faite d'elle et de luy, puisse être converti
A leur religion, et tenir leur party.

madly enamoured of her, and offered to put away his wife, Antoinette de la Marck, to espouse her; or that the cautious diplomacy of the cardinal de Ferrara aroused some suspicion that Philip's overtures were not so sincere as they were represented. Meeting the legate one day in Catherine's presence-chamber at St. Germain, the king of Navarre put the question direct, whether his catholic majesty were indeed ready upon certain conditions to bestow upon him the kingdom of Navarre. The cardinal replied with hesitation, "that effectively his majesty might find opposition in his cabinet, which it would require time to overcome; but that at any rate king Philip would gratify him with the donation of Sardinia, after declaring that isle a kingdom." The effect of this frank declaration was, that Antoine's elation being somewhat subdued, he offered no impediment to the departure of Jeanne from St. Germain to Paris. Wearied of the court, the queen took up her abode again at the hotel, Rue de la Grenelle. She was there soon joined by the prince de Condé, who warmly resented the heartless treatment she experienced at his brother's hands. The little madame Catherine, then four years old, accompanied her mother, and proved a great solace to Jeanne in her affliction. The prince of Navarre by the command of his father, remained at St. Germain, to the extreme regret of the queen, who dreaded lest the mind of her son might become contaminated by association with the depraved court. "The palace of the queen of Navarre is truly a school for the study of the new doctrines," writes the Venetian ambassador, then resident in the

capital.[1] "The religious belief of the king of Navarre was once sustained by his consort's exhortations, for he loved her much and submitted to her guidance. This woman, born with a perverse mind, but endowed with wit, marvellously sagacious and subtle, urged him on, and confirmed him in these opinions, whenever she perceived that he relaxed in his fervour respecting them."

The formidable coalition, meantime, was effected between the constable de Montmorency, the duke de Guise, and the marshal de St. André to maintain the ascendancy of the Romish faith throughout the realm; to compel the queen-regent to reinstate the princes of Guise in the government; to discountenance heresy; and to revive the ancient edicts decreeing pains and penalties against defaulters from the faith. These great champions of Romish supremacy thus leagued together, were designated the Triumvirate. The Protestants scattered and divided by Antoine's veering politics, were too feeble to make successful head against the preponderance of the rival faction in the cabinet. Most urgent became the importunity of the legate that Antoine should abandon the Reformed party, and league himself with the Guises against the aspiring pretentions of queen Catherine and Condé. Every condition which Antoine stipulated for, was promptly conceded; because it was intended to fulfil nothing. The Spanish ambassador promised him in his royal master's name, the immediate possession of the island of Sardinia, should he prefer to keep his con-

[1] Tommasio, Relation des ambassadeurs Vénitiens sur les affaires de France au 16ème siècle. Relation de Marco Antonio Barbaro, 1563.

sort Jeanne, rather than accept the hand of Mary Stuart. The sterile island tendered for his acceptance, was represented to Antoine as a paradise of delights. The balmy climate, the orange and lemon groves, the luxuriant foliage and verdure, and the fertility of the soil, were themes upon which the wily Chantonnay perpetually dwelt in his discourse. They even proceeded to the length of causing an apocryphal map to be drawn of the country, having the districts, which they averred, were most famed for fruitful produce and delicious scenery, indicated thereon. Sites of noble cities indebted for existence to the felicitous imagination of the legate, were there noted. The venal chamberlain Descars affirmed on oath that having visited Sardinia and examined with his own eyes the country so rapturously eulogized, it surpassed in beauty the description given by the legate. The bishop of Auxerre, who had never even approached the island, boldly confirmed Descars's assertions, and dilated enthusiastically on the subject to his unsuspecting master. Antoine was at length so overpowered by the glowing description of the magnificent kingdom tendered for his acceptance, that he finally sent his reply to the Spanish ambassador in the following words:- "You may inform his Catholic majesty that it has been all along rather your fault than mine, that his will has not been already accomplished."[1]

The cardinal of Ferrara, as may be divined, did not relax in his endeavours to dazzle the mind of Jeanne d'Albret, with a relation of the donations in store for herself also, provided that she renounced her connection

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. 1.

with the Reformed party. Jeanne coldly replied, "that she desired from his Catholic majesty only her just rights; and that she was by no means minded to alienate, or exchange, any part of the heritage still remaining to her."

When the court removed from St. Germain to Paris, at the commencement of the year 1563, Antoine commenced a series of most scandalous persecutions towards his unhappy consort. On several occasions, he tried to compel her forcibly to attend mass. The young prince of Navarre, a bold and gallant boy of ten years old, happened to be present at one of these scenes. Being devotedly attached to his royal mother, Henry flew to her side, and with all his strength tried to defend her from violence, angrily protesting that nothing should induce himself, either, to go to mass. In spite of Jeanne's supplications, Antoine, in a fury, snatched up his son, and after soundly boxing his ears, he summoned the prince's sub-preceptor, and commanded that he should undergo further castigation.[1]

These many and varied provocations, roused at length the determined spirit of queen Jeanne. In her affliction, she sought the advice of her staunch friend, the viscount de Gourdon. The queen's letter is peculiar: its phraseology savours of the stern, sententious style, then so much in vogue with the sectarian ministers. It is greatly to be regretted, that the hard, and even ascetic, tone of Jeanne's mind, veiled so much that was loveable and womanly in her character. Jeanne, amid her sorrows, expresses herself very strongly, as will be seen

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. I.

in her letter to the viscount, respecting Antoine's follies, in terms, such as, if she had the indiscretion to taunt him with personally, could not fail to aggravate his displeasure, and their alienation.

QUEEN JEANNE, TO THE VISCOUNT DE GOURDON.[1]

MONSIEUR LE VISCOMTE,

During the early days of this reign, perceiving that madame the queen-mother, and monsieur the king of Navarre, my husband, continued in peace and concord to discharge the affairs of the regency, and that they not only put a stop to the tortures and executions for heresy, but even granted liberty of conscience, with leave to erect churches outside the towns, and within all castles and *fiefs de haubert* such as yours—after mature thought, I came to the conclusion that from thenceforth all things would progress to a happy end. Since which, however, the king of Navarre, hungering after the seductive flatteries of several fair damsels, dexterous and versed in toils for inspiring love, of whom the said queen avails herself to accomplish and perfect her secret designs, the said king of Navarre, I repeat, has become so deluded and enervated, both mentally and bodily, by indolence and luxury, that he has permitted the Guises, assisted by the constable, to regain the upper hand, to his great shame, and the public calamity. Besides which, the said triumvirate has traitorously and unworthily assailed the prince de Condé; while the said king of Navarre is become so stultified by the trickery and false promises of Rome, made through the queen-mother, to give as restitution of our kingdom, iniquitously retained by the Spaniards, and by his fear of losing what still remains to us, that he will neither say nor do anything, nor yet permit me. My heart feels very heavy

[1] M.S. Bibl. Roy., Vallant, Portef. 1er.—Inedited.

and sorrowful, when I contemplate all that is concocting here in so sinister a manner; and when I see this said triumvirate oppose the princes and the peace of the realm, and purpose to sow tares with discord throughout the kingdom—as all here who are expert, and advised in the modes of good government acknowledge, amongst whom I name the archbishop of Vienne, the bishops of Valence and Oléron, the chancellor de l'Hôpital, and other sage personages not misled and distracted by vice, avarice and ignorance. Amidst all this woe, my soul, sad and perplexed, yearns to be counselled and consoled by a loyal friend. Come then to me here, or at least write me word what it appears to you that I ought to do, and I will try and conform to your opinion. Since the unexpected skirmish which occurred at Vassy, through the said duke de Guise, the prince of Condé has courageously manifested himself as becomes the champion of reform, and the declared enemy of the said triumvirate, although the king of Navarre, his brother, has most unnaturally placed himself at its head. I pray God, monsieur le Viscomte, to have you in His holy keeping. Written at Paris,[1] this 28th day of January, 1562.

Your very good, and assured friend,

JEHANNE, ROYNE.

In reply to this flattering letter from queen Jeanne, the viscount de Gourdon despatched a courier with his response, which did not reach the queen until the middle of February, as he was sojourning at the castle of Sennecières, in Quercy, After a rambling statement of fears kindled by the critical position of parties, the

[1] The letter is dated from Pau, in the document preserved in the Bibliothèque Impériale. But as the queen was undoubtedly sojourning in Paris during the early part of the year 1562, it is doubtless a fault of transcription.

viscount gives his opinion on the conduct which his royal mistress ought to pursue, thus: "In respect to the measures which it appears to me that your majesty should adopt on this present emergency, it is my advice, that, being tied to a husband, and living under his authority, and being at the same time despoiled of your kingdom, but having present hope of its final restitution, your majesty should neither act, nor undertake anything whatever, against the will of your said husband, in the matter of religion. Every one is convinced that your majesty—a most enlightened princess, and virtuously firm in well-doing—follows the Reformed opinions. Such being the fact, it is needless to furnish your enemies with subject and cause for declaration and controversy, as heretofore."[1] The viscount de Gourdon, even, seems to have attached a certain degree of credit to Philip's fallacious promises; and, consequently, he advises the queen to temporize. Jeanne's dauntless spirit, however, could not brook such counsel; nor yet to make submissive overtures to a prince who had threatened her with divorce; and whose ill-usage had degraded her in the presence of the court. Condé, Coligny, La Rochefoucault, and a multitude of brave cavaliers, injured by the shifting politics of the court, looked to her for countenance and support; and Jeanne vowed, in her innermost heart, that they should not be disappointed.

The bloody fray at Vassy, between the retainers of the duke de Guise, and the Huguenots, who were assembled at worship when the duke passed through,

[1] M.S. Bibl. Royale.—Vallant, Portef. 1er.—Ined.

with his armed train, had revived the ancient animosities of creed. Antoine refused to listen to the representations of the Protestant ministers, who, headed by Theodore de Bèze, proceeded to Paris, to demand justice for the outrage, declaring, "*que qui toucheroit au bout du doigt au duc de Guise, son frère, le toucheroit au corps.*" The queen-regent, alarmed at the reconciliation and junction of the king of Navarre with the chiefs of the Romish faction, which destroyed the balance of parties enabling her to dominate over the cabinet, in vain attemped to create a diversion. It is stated, by some historians, that, in order to retain the king of Navarre, as chief of the reformed party, to oppose his influence to that of the duke de Guise, Catherine offered Antoine the hand of her youngest daughter, Marguerite de Valois, the promised bride of his son, the prince of Navarre. This assertion is scarcely deserving of credit, as the king of Navarre was nearly forty-four years of age, and the young princess had not yet accomplished her tenth year. In her perplexity, Catherine had recourse to the queen of Navarre, remembering how entire was once Jeanne's empire over the restless mind of king Antoine. Catherine implored the queen to exert her power over her consort, to induce him to break his fatal alliance with Guise. She recalled to the mind of Jeanne the happiness of the early days of her union with Antoine; and, with the winning argument in which she excelled, Catherine exhorted her to make the most unqualified submission to appease her husband's resentment, and to conform, in all things, to his diection, until the dawn of a more propitious

day. Jeanne's heart, however, was sore; the insults she had received, left behind a feeling of ineffaceable resentment; and she coldly declined "to hold any communication with the king of Navarre, on the subject of religion or politics, in which matters they so materially differed." The queen-regent persisted in her remonstrances, and gravely admonished Jeanne to yield, at least, outward conformity to the Romish faith; and to reconcile herself to the papal envoys, the cardinals of Ferrara and Ste. Croix. Jeanne demanded of the queen, what step her majesty, on her conscience, would advise her to take, to achieve that desirable end. Catherine replied, that she counselled her to attend mass, which, in her opinion, was the only remedy by which she could hope to reconcile herself to her husband, and to preserve the principality of Béarn for her son. "Madame," exclaimed the queen of Navarre, with passionate vehemence, "if I, at this very moment, held my son, and all the kingdoms of the world together, in my grasp, I would hurl them to the bottom of the sea, rather than peril the salvation of my soul."[1]

The king of Navarre finally leagued himself with the triumvirate, and attended mass publicly on Palm Sunday, 1562, accompanied by the Guises, and his brother the cardinal de Bourbon. The procession passed in solemn pomp through the streets of Paris, to the church of Ste. Geneviève. The constable surrounded by a staff of valiant captains rode some little distance in advance of the procession proclaiming to the assembled multitude, "Mes amis, thank God for having rescued you, from

[1] Théodore de Bèze, Hist. des Eglises Réformées de France, t. i. p. 689.

mighty woes, in sending to your aid the king of Navarre. You perceive the cordial union which exists between his majesty, and the duke de Guise, and which will serve to maintain you in concord, while serving God, and the cause of religion, and will contribute to the glory, and exaltation of our king!"[1]

The warlike attitude of parties in Paris created much solicitude in the mind of all true subjects of the king. The hotels de Montmorency and de Guise, resembled hostile citadels, ready at any instant to pour forth bands of armed soldiery, and to deluge the streets of Paris with blood. The consort of the constable, Madelaine de Savoye, a woman of dauntless and imperious spirit, incessantly urged her husband to uphold the true faith; and, if needs be, to wrest from Catherine the power which she seemed inclined to delegate to Condé, and to the admiral de Coligny. "Monseigneur, you are the representative of the noblest barony of France. The escutcheon which you have inherited from your ancestor, with its right noble legend, *Dieu conserve le premier Baron Chrétien*," indicates to you the part which their example ought to compel you to take for the maintenance of religion. It is your illustrious mission to defend the faith with all your power, and to preserve it pure and undefiled. It is for you, Monseigneur, to uphold religion throughout the realm, and to maintain it with the inviolable constancy which your forefathers manifested for the holy Roman Church."[2] The duchesse de Valentinois also addressed most urgent

[1] Lettre du Nonce, Prosper de Ste. Croix, au cardinal Borromée. Aymon, Receuil des Actes Synodaux de France.

[2] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, liv. 27.

supplications to the constable, entreating him to uphold the true faith; and to aid the princes of Guise in checking the sectarian tendencies of the court. Damville, Montmorency's second son, a prince of fiery and impetuous temper, and a fervid partisan of Rome, implored his father to become a second time the saviour of his country. The maréchal de Montmorency,[1] on the contrary, prudently advised the consable to adopt moderate measures; to conciliate and persuade the queen-regent, rather than attempt to intimidate her; and to gain the confidence of the queen of Navarre, as a future means of controlling her consort. So suspicious did this sage advice appear to the intolerant duchesse de Montmorency, that fearing lest her son, the heir of Montmorency, should fall into the toils of the Lutheran party, she quitted Chantilly, and took up her abode with the maréchal in his official residence at the Hotel de Ville, as governor of Paris, the better to watch his movements, "Madame la connétable, the mother of monsieur de Montmorency, suspicious of the latter's intentions, is gone to live with her son, to watch his conduct, and to take care of him. That right noble lady manages in so adroit a way, that she often induces monsieur le maréchal, to attend with her the sermons of a learned monk of the order of Minimes," approvingly wrote the nuncio, Prosper de Ste. Croix.[2]

[1] François, the eldest son of the constable de Montmorency and of Madelaine de Savoye, was born at Chantilly in July 1530. He espoused in 1550, Diane de France, the legitimated daughter of Henry II, and widow of Horace Farnese, duke de Castro.

[2] Lettre du Nonce, Prosper de Ste. Croix, Actes Synodaux de France, t. I.

Meanwhile, the most deadly alarm possessed queen Catherine, at the unexpected desertion of the king of Navarre. The duke de Guise, at the invitation of Antoine de Bourbon, entered Paris with 3,000 horse; and took every possible opportunity, when in the presence of the two queens, Jeanne and Catherine, to demonstrate his good understanding with that misguided prince. The cardinal de Ferrara and the nuncio, aggravated by their subtle intrigues, the distrust and the perplexity of parties. The ambassador, Chantonnay demeaned himself, in the most insolent manner when in the presence of the regent, openly threatening her with the displeasure of the king of Spain. The queen of Navarre he treated with scornful disrespect; and he was heard more than once to menace her with the immediate invasion of her domains in the south, unless she very materially altered her conduct, so as to give satisfaction to king Philip. As some check to the daring interference of this ambassador, Catherine caused the young king to sit at the council-board, and to be present at the audiences which she granted to foreign ambassadors. One day, the queen remarked, in reply to some observation that Chantonnay made, with his usual freedom, "that the king would not always continue in his minority; and that those who presumed most now, would then only find themselves his servants and subjects, and very far removed from the power and influence they coveted; but that she herself should always remain a queen, a mother, and one whose behests would be implicitly obeyed by her children." Then, addressing the young king, Catherine said, "is it not so,

monseigneur?" "Madame, you may feel very well assured that it is so, and will be so!" responded Charles, in no very gentle accents, with a frowning glance at the audacious Chantonnay.[1] Nothing daunted, however, by the menaces of the youthful king, and of his royal mother, the intrigues of Chantonnay, and the Italian cardinals, at length achieved the expulsion of the great Huguenot chieftains from the court. The king of Navarre, the blind tool of the Spanish faction, and the nominal leader of the triumvirate, enforced Philip's mandate with wilful obstinacy. The admiral de Coligny, Condé—whose noble bearing throughout these cabals, challenged almost the worship of the Huguenot population of France—the cardinal de Châtillon, d'Andelot, the count de la Rochefoucauld, and the prince de Porcien, retired from court, and sought refuge in the towns of Meaux and Orleans. Catherine, incensed beyond measure, told the intriguing nuncio, "that the princes departed by their own free will from the court, and had her permission to return thither whenever they deemed it expedient." The ambassador Chantonnay, directly replied, "in that case, his Catholic majesty had less to thank the Christian queen for, than he had supposed; nevertheless, it mattered not to the king of Spain upon what pretext the admiral and his brothers received their demission from court, provided that they did depart." In his next despatch to his royal master, Chantonnay observes, after informing Philip, that it was debated in the council of the

[1] Lettre de l'ambassadeur Chantonnay au roi Catholique. Mémoires de Condé, t. II. p 23.

triumvirate, whether it would be expedient to interdict the reformed ministers from preaching in public; "Monsieur de Vendôme has prayed me to mention this circumstance to the Catholic king, and to supplicate his majesty to bear in mind the compensation which the said sieur expects from the king."[1]

Philip's envoys, meantime, irritated the queen-regent by their malignant insinuations. Catherine's perplexity was extreme: Jeanne d'Albret implored her to place herself under the protection of Condé, and to quit Paris for Orleans. The triumvirate affected to hold councils in the palace of the sovereign, to which Catherine was not admitted. The most violent measures, it was rumoured, were then discussed, relative to the two queens, Catherine and Jeanne d'Albret. The Papal and Spanish envoys, in reality, advocated most sanguinary expedients to rid themselves of the opposition, which they expected to encounter from both these princesses. The queen, with her accustomed unscrupulous daring, being resolved one day to ascertain the subject discussed by the triumvirate with closed doors, caused a tube to be introduced between the wall and the arras hangings of the apartment in which they assembled, so that from the chamber above she could hear their debates. After listening to some factious and treasonable propositions from the duke de Guise, and the king of Navarre, Catherine heard the marshal de St. André propose that the triumvirate should rid themselves of the queen-regent, by causing her to be

[1] Lettre de l'ambassadeur Chantonnay au roi Catholique. Mém. de Condé, t. II. p. 26.

seized, and secretly drowned in the Seine.[1] This atrocious project was strongly combated by the king of Navarre, who, on the first impulse, generally opined with regard to some principle and honour. This proposal was probably not seriously proffered by St. André, who was a bold and bluff soldier, intemperate, and somewhat jocular in debate; the menace, however, inspired Catherine with such horror, which, added to the tumultuous condition of the capital, determined her to retire precipitately to Fontainebleau with the king.

Jeanne d'Albret, therefore, remained alone in the factious capital, exposed to the assaults of her rancorous enemies, the nuncio, and the cardinals de Lorraine and of Ferrara. As soon as the court departed, she renewed her demand to be permitted to retire into Béarn; supporting her application on the express sanction given to her project by the queen-regent. Philip and his emissaries, however, were again plotting Jeanne's overthrow: she was alone in the capital, deserted by Condé and Coligny, who had retired to Orleans; oppressed by her husband; and ill, and sick at heart, from the persecution which she endured. At this period, Jeanne's life was even in serious jeopardy; and it was more than once hinted in the councils of the formidable triumvirate, that a well-directed bullet from the arquebuse of one of the fanatics, who swarmed in the streets of Paris, would probably save the future effusion of much Catholic blood. It is certain, that it was formally proposed in the council to arrest Jeanne d'Albret, and detain her, as a prisoner of state, in one of the fortresses.

[1] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps.

of France. The matter was brought before the council, it is surmised, by Chantonnay, the Spanish ambassador. Philip II. hated Jeanne d'Albret, as the protectress of reform; and as the rightful claimant of one of his Spanish crowns. The cowardly Antoine gave his full, and voluntary consent to this scheme for the imprisonment of his noble-minded consort; and expressed himself so well pleased at the design, that the cardinal de Lorraine warmly grasped the king's hand, and exclaimed: "*Voilà, monseigneur, un acte digne de vous! Dieu vous donne bonne vie, et longue!*"[1] The warrant for the queen's detention was immediately prepared; but, during the time that elapsed, whilst the self-constituted council debated upon whom the questionable honour of its execution should devolve, Jeanne obtained information of the proceeding. The queen manifested no violent emotion on learning this fresh instance of her husband's desertion, and of his collusion with her bitter foes; "but from that moment," she sadly remarks, in one of her letters, written some years after the event, "I closed my heart for ever against the affection which I still cherished for my husband, and devoted its every impulse to perform my duty."[2]

Queen Jeanne notified to Condé the danger to which she was exposed. The secret soon transpired, doubtlessly by design; and the Huguenots of the capital, encouraged by their ministers, gathered tumultuously before the Hotel de Condé, where the queen resided, hoping to protect her against the designs of her

[1] Vauvilliers. Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret. t. I., p. 212.
[2] Ibid.

enemies. The queen then again firmly demanded permission to depart; and she intimated to her worthless consort, that, whether licence were granted to her, or not, she intended to quit Paris. Some slight remorse seems, at this period, to have agitated the contemptible Antoine; Chantonnay, however, was always at hand—the tempter who stifled any misgivings, and who urged him to ruin. He represented that, if affairs remained as now, the king would never receive any indemnity from king Philip; but, on the contrary, his majesty would incur the resentment of the Catholic king. It was, nevertheless, unanimously agreed that, to arrest the queen of Navarre in the capital, after the turbulent demonstration so recently made in her favour, would be an experiment too hazardous to attempt. Jeanne's enemies, therefore, came to the conclusion, to execute their design at Vendôme, in which town the queen would sojourn, on her journey homewards. The triumvirate committed a grave error in permitting the queen of Navarre to quit the capital. Jeanne's energies revived, when she found herself free; her friends were numerous; and Condé, with several thousand troops, held possession of Orleans. Had the Guises persisted, with unwavering courage, in commanding her arrest, the Roman Catholic faction would have effected a comparatively easy and bloodless triumph.

Queen Jeanne quitted Paris about the beginning of April, 1562, accompanied by her daughter, madame Catherine, and escorted by a numerous and imposing troop of horsemen. Before her departure, Jeanne visited her son, at St. Germain, where it was the will

of Antoine de Bourbon that Henry should reside, under the care of Vincent Lauro, who had been recently nominated as governor to the young prince, in the room of La Gaucherie, and the other professors appointed by the queen. This had been a deep grievance to Jeanne; and in vain she remonstrated against the nomination of the intriguing Lauro, to be the prince's preceptor. The king of Navarre, nevertheless, by the advice of the Jesuit, Lainez persisted in his design. The young prince was greatly afflicted at his approaching separation from his mother; the queen, also, wept bitterly, as she clasped the prince in her arms, and besought him never to forget her counsels, amidst the distractions of the court. After a brief interval, queen Jeanne dried her tears; then, taking her son by the hand, she very earnestly and affectionately forbad him to attend mass; she added thereto, a threat, that if the prince disobeyed her command, she would disinherit him, and refuse longer to own him for her son.[1]

The following day, Jeanne took leave of her husband. Antoine's cruel and unmanly conduct had not yet effaced the passionate love which she felt, when, in defiance of opposition, she bestowed upon him her hand. Her parting from him was melancholy: with the eloquence of which she was mistress, the queen besought Antoine to abjure his connection with the Guise faction; to return to her, and to his allegiance to Catherine, whose good faith Jeanne does not seem to doubt. The king made an evasive reply; the royal

[1] Négociations d'Hippolyte d'Esté, cardinal de Ferrara, p. 136.

pair, once so fondly attached, then separated, to meet no more.

It appears that the queen did not suspect the design of the council, for her arrest at Vendôme, until after she quitted Paris. She rested, the first night, at Olivet; Théodore de Bèze here met the queen, bringing letters sent by Catherine to Condé, and which Jeanne was requested to deliver to the prince in person.

The following day, Jeanne continued her journey with great despatch. She reached Vendôme about the 14th of May. The queen took up her abode in the château of her husband's ancestors, intending to make a brief sojourn there to recruit her strength, which was much exhausted. It was at this place that peril awaited queen Jeanne from the machinations of the council. The king of Navarre was aware that his consort intended to repose at Vendôme; accordingly secret instructions had been forwarded to the authorities of the town to prevent the queen from continuing her journey. This danger Jeanne escaped only by the sudden and lawless descent of a body of four hundred mercenary troops upon the town of Vendôme, for the purpose of pillage. As these troops were on their way to reinforce the garrison of Orleans, Jeanne forbade that their entrance into the town should be opposed. No sooner, however, were these fierce marauders admitted, than they formed themselves into bands, and paraded the town, pillaging the houses of the inhabitants, and slaughtering all who opposed them. They entered the cathedral, and overthrew the altar, breaking the images of saints, and otherwise mutilating the sacred edifice. Even the monumental effigies of

the ancient counts de Vendôme were destroyed by these ruthless soldiers; who, moreover, smashed the stained glass windows of the splendid sepulchral chapel of Vendôme. Jeanne does not appear to have made any effort to appease the tumult. She was suffering from indisposition, and probably was too prostrated in mind to be capable of exertion. It is possible, moreover, that these troops may have been sent by Condé to cover Jeanne's retreat from Vendôme, he having obtained information of the plot against her liberty; certain is it, however, that they offered the queen neither insult nor molestation; but remained in possession of the town until after Jeanne had taken her departure thence. The ambassador Chantonnay, amidst other choice morsels collected for the special enlightenment of his royal master, king Philip, says, "whilst madame de Vendôme was sojourning in Vendôme, a body of four hundred horsemen made a descent on that town. Madame de Vendôme forbad any one to oppose them, saying, 'that she would not have them harrassed; but that she herself would so control them, that they should commit no ravage.' Nevertheless, as soon as these lawless marauders entered the town, they desecrated the churches, and especially the monastery where that sacred relic, the Holy Tear is deposited, and drove away the priests and monks: after having pillaged everything they could lay their hands upon, they took their departure. I believe, however, that this enterprise was executed without the sanction or knowledge of the said dame de Vendôme."[1]

[1] Lettre de M. de Chantonnay au roi Catholique, Mém. de Condé, t. II. Journal de Brulart.

From Vendôme, queen Jeanne continued her journey to Châtellerault. Here she remained one night, an inmate of the lordly castle appertaining to her consort. On the morrow, she proceeded to Duras. Jeanne was received with great magnificence by M. de Duras, who was one of the most renowned of the Huguenot chieftains. After her arrival at the castle of Duras, the indisposition of the queen increased; and worn out by anxiety, Jeanne took to her bed on the following day. The queen was still suffering from sickness, when she received a visit from one M. de Remy, who came to Duras to represent to her majesty the lamentable condition of the Protestant population of Guyenne, of which province the king of Navarre was governor; and to supplicate the queen to intercede in their behalf with king Antoine and his lieutenant, de Burie. The count de Burie had been a staunch friend of Jeanne's mother, queen Marguerite. Jeanne readily promised her intercession, and despatched a messenger to de Burie, with whom she was on terms of amity. The count, who bore Jeanne most reverential respect, readily promised to comply with her request, as far as his orders permitted him freedom of option. He also sent a private message to the queen, enjoining her, not to bestow her public patronage upon the Huguenots, after her arrival in Béarn; as in case she adopted so imprudent a step, he had received formal instructions from the government not to oppose the entrance of Spanish troops into her principality.[1]

All the Protestant leaders of the province of Guyenne,

[1] Vauvilliers—Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret. Mém. du maréchal de Montluc.

meantime, had risen to arms; and the capture of Orleans by Condé was the signal for a general insurrection. The marshal de Montluc, commissioned by the government to suppress the rebellion; executed his mission with unrelenting cruelty. Montluc, who was the elder brother of the pious and eloquent bishop of Valence, a favourer of the reformation, was, on the contrary, the fiery champion of Rome: the marshal's renown as a soldier was great; though Montluc and the marshal de Tavannes had the repute of being the most ferocious and sanguinary generals in the king's service.

Jeanne listened in sorrowful concern to the report brought to her of the persecutions endured by the Huguenot population of Guyenne, and of the indiscriminate slaughter by which their risings were avenged; and she resolved to despatch Barbaut, her secretary, to remonstrate with Montluc; and to request him to suspend the executions, promising to accomplish the pacification of the country herself, with the aid of de Burie. Barbaut found Montluc at Calonge, on his way to succour Bordeaux, then menaced by a party of Huguenot troops, under the count de Duras. Montluc, however, turned a deaf ear to the queen's expostulation, for his harsh and savage disposition delighted in bloodshed. "When the Huguenots heard my name mentioned, they fancied that the executioner was at their back; and consequently they gave me the name of *le tiran.*"[1] writes the marshal himself, with much complacency, in his celebrated Commentaries. Montluc was not to be

[1] Commentaires de Messire Blaise de Montluc, maréchal de France, liv. 3ème.

diverted from his enterprise on Bordeaux, by the remonstrances of Jeanne's secretary. He, however, consented to dispatch two gentlemen, to confer with the queen at Duras, and to hear from her own lips the remedy which she proposed to adopt for the pacification of the province. This apparent concession on the part of Montluc, who continued his march upon Bordeaux, without abatement of speed, was merely a feint to amuse the queen, so that she might fall an easier victim to the snare he had laid for her. The marshal had received a command from Antoine de Bourbon, and his colleagues of the triumvirate, to arrest the queen and to escort her back to Paris; but above all, he was directed carefully to intercept her passage, so that she might not cross the frontier into Béarn.

Jeanne continued very ill at Duras, whilst her secretary was absent. During a skirmish in the neighbourhood, between some of M. de Duras' troopers, and a party of Montluc's levies, the count de Candale[1] was taken prisoner, on his way from Bordeaux to Cadillac. By command of Duras, Candale was presented to queen Jeanne, as her prisoner, by his captors. The count was the son-in-law of the constable de Montmorency; so that Jeanne, if she felt disposed, might have avenged the slights she had recently received from the constable and his bigoted consort, by commanding the detention

[1] Henri de Foix, count de Candale, de Béranges et d'Astarac, Captal de Buch, chevalier de l'Ordre du Roi. He married Marie de Montmorency, fourth daughter of the constable, Anne de Montmorency. The count left one daughter, Marguerite, heiress of the princely house of Candale, Captal de Buch, who married Louis de la Valette, duke d'Epernon. The count de Candale died in 1573.

of her prisoner. Instead of which, she instantly gave him his liberty; after first demanding and receiving a promise from the count, who was her own near relative, that he would not in future bear arms against the Huguenots. Candale promised all that was asked of him, intending to perform nothing; and with the perfidious intent of going over again to the enemy, when Montluc's bands approached Duras—a design which he successfully accomplished.[1]

From Duras, queen Jeanne proceeded to Caumont, where she was received by M. de Clérac, brother of the great Protestant chieftain, Caumont de la Force. Montluc's ambassadors followed her thither; but before their arrival, Jeanne received the important advice from the count de Duras, that Montluc, with the army under his command, was advancing rapidly upon Caumont, in the hope of surprising the castle, and taking her prisoner. The feeble condition of her health had alone induced the queen to travel by slow stages, after she quitted Vendôme; for Jeanne fully appreciated the sorrowful fact that there was no safe abiding place for her in the kingdom over which her royal consort nominally ruled. The queen had taken the precaution of despatching a missive addressed to the barons d'Arros and d'Audaux, commanding them to meet her on the

[1] "Mons. le comte," says the marshal in his memoirs, "related to me the promise he had made, for otherwise he could not have escaped out of their hands. I told him that M. de Bordeaux should grant him absolution. After all, that promise could not bind him, as the count was not a prisoner of war; besides, the promise had been given to the queen of Navarre, who styled herself the very humble servant of our king, and very loyal to render his majesty service."

banks of the Garonne with a force sufficiently strong to protect her retreat into Béarn. When Jeanne, therefore, received intelligence of the advance of Montluc, ill as she was, she rose from her bed, and taking to horse, she made rapidly for the frontier, protected by a small troop of the loyal retainers of Caumont. Fortunately for the queen, her mandate had been well and promptly obeyed by the gallant sénéschal of Béarn. The cavalry, eight hundred strong, headed by the brave d'Audaux, met the queen and her slender escort as she was flying towards the frontier; the blast of Montluc's trumpets was distinctly audible as the gallant troop closed round their sovereign, and by the time that Jeanne found herself in safety within her hereditary principality, the marshal's standard was floating above the tower of Caumont. "Thus we came to the château de Caumont," relates Montluc in his Commentaries,[1] "Heaven only knows the grudge the queen of Navarre afterwards bore me, and how she reviled me, calling me tyrant, and every other sorry epithet she could think of; but she was a woman, and therefore enjoyed immunity from personal combat," adds the pugnacious marshal, with apparent regret. Montluc continued Jeanne's bitter enemy; and he vainly solicited permission to pursue her to her own capital at Pau, uttering, at the same time, a threat, that to subdue her haughty spirit, he would there have recourse to so atrocious an expedient, as demonstrates both the violence and profligacy of his character, and the licence of the times which permitted of so treasonable a boast without consigning

[1] Livre 5ème.

the offender to well merited chastisement. "God, however, preserved the queen of Navarre to become the prop of our France!" says the historian who records the incident.[1]

From Fontainebleau, during this interval, the queen regent had addressed her celebrated series of letters to Condé; in which she implored him to take up arms in behalf of "the mother and her children," and not to disarm until her enemies, and those of the kingdom, should be subdued. "Mon cousin, be assured that I will never forget what you do for me. If I die, before having the means of acknowledging your services, I will leave behind me a memorandum to that effect, for my children's guidance."[2] In these letters, Catherine undeniably authorizes Condé to arm for her rescue from the tutelage of the triumvirate. These famous epistles, which transfer to the queen the responsibility of placing weapons in Condé's hands, and, by this act, of having sanctioned the bloody war which ensued, were perused by every cabinet in Europe; and were even submitted to the judgment of the German Diet. So general was the impression that Condé, as a true and good subject, could not have refused obedience to the summons of the regent, and had not, therefore, been guilty of rebellion, that Catherine found herself compelled to publish an explanation of what her words did really signify; as she afterwards peremptorily denied the interpretation everywhere given. The gloss which Catherine was

[1] Hist. des Cinq Roys, p. 218.

[2] Lettre de Catherine de Medici au prince de Condé, Mém. de Condé, t. II.

pleased to assign to her letters, when she no longer needed Condé's services, is quite at variance with the words she there uses; so that, if the queen's statements are to be credited, the text of her epistles to Condé can only be regarded as a clever cypher, to be accepted in sense contrary to the usual meaning of the language employed.

Soon after Jeanne's departure from Paris, the king of Navarre, and the Guises, at the suggestion of the nuncio, to whom Catherine had imprudently avowed her intention of proceeding to Orleans, set out for Fontainebleau, and, despite the regent's opposition, they compelled her, with the king, to return to the capital.[1] The politic Catherine, though almost beside herself with consternation, managed affairs with her accustomed ability. She lavished more than ordinary favour on the king of Navarre and the Guises, whilst she continued her importunity to Condé, "to deliver the king from the power of messieurs de Guise, who held his majesty a captive." The valiant Condé promptly obeyed the mandate. Manifestoes were published by the Huguenot chieftains, summoning all loyal subjects to join their standard, and rescue their sovereign from the princes of Lorraine; copies of the queen-regent's letters were forwarded to the Protestant electors of Germany; and levies of troops were made throughout the Germanic states. Condé remained at Orleans, which he garrisoned with two thousand eight hundred infantry. The queen of Navarre, immediately after her return into Béarn, despatched the count de

[1] Mém. de Michel de Castelnau. Mém. de Tavannes. De Thou.

Grammont to the prince, with a body of six thousand Gascon troops, "all old and choice soldiers," says Brantôme, "veterans who had weathered many a Spanish campaign." This important reinforcement enabled Condé to take the field, in equal force to his opponents. When Antoine de Bourbon was apprized of this bold proceeding on the part of his consort, his fury surpassed all bounds; and, probably, queen Jeanne might have witnessed the advance of the terrible Montluc and his legions, upon her capital, had not the lukewarm countenance which the queen-regent afforded to the mandates of the triumvirate, held them somewhat in restraint. Though Antoine and his colleagues threatened and oppressed queen Catherine, they lived in constant dread of her intrigues; and Catherine had succeeded in inspiring them with so unfeigned a fear of her powers of dissimulation, that they would willingly have resigned into her hands the authority so violently usurped, provided that they could satisfy themselves that the queen had forgiven their rebellion, and that she was prepared to maintain the Romish faith.

Rapid triumphs attended the arms of Condé. Ere three months elapsed, the Huguenots were in possession of the towns of Orleans, Bourges, Blois, Tours, Pont de Cé, Poitiers, La Rochelle, Agen, Montauban, Castres, Montpellier, Beziers, Nîmes, Tournon, Lyons, Valence, Rouen, Havre de Grâce, Dieppe, Caen, Bayeux, and eight other places, of smaller note; "so that," says Brantôme, "when any one inquired what towns the Huguencts had reduced, the reply was, "you should rather inquire the names of the places which they do not hold."

The extremity to which France was reduced, by the double-dealing of her rulers, and the conflict of faction, is detailed, in a highly interesting and important letter, written by a confidential secretary of Catherine's, and addressed to the bishop of Limoges, the French ambassador in Spain—a document hitherto inedited.

The king of Navarre is mentioned in this despatch under the contemptuous soubriquet of "*l'Eschangeur*," so little was Antoine respected, or confided in by the Roman Catholic party. "When Lutaine quitted this, we were involved in troubles, of which he has doubtless given you account," writes the queen's scribe to de l'Aubespine.[1] Since which, nevertheless, Blois, Tours, Angers, le Mans, Rouen, Lyons, and an infinite number of other places have deserted our cause; so that the king is no longer obeyed, or, at least, what is written from hence, is not regarded by the prince, who states that he does everything for the king's service, and that those around his majesty, and the queen-mother, detain them as prisoners. In every town the greatest licence prevails. All the churches are ruined, and the churchmen driven away. Amidst this desolation, I leave you to imagine the murders, pillage, and violence committed. They (the Huguenots) hold the banks of the river from Nevers to Nantes, so that not a soul do they suffer to pass without searching and rifling his person, seizing his letters, and detaining the king's moneys. The inhabitants of the towns have no liberty of egress; nor can they take from their homes so much as a single shirt; so that it may be said, that we have fallen into the most pitiable

[1] M.S. Bibl. Royale. Inedited.

and lamentable condition. The queen-mother does all in her power to tranquillize affairs; but I know that it must be all in vain. One faction insists on establishing a new religion; the other, defends and maintains the old by fire and sword; at the expense of the king's poor subjects, and the ruin of the kingdom; and all through the counsels of that fine league,[1] the details of which we have before discussed. Your Chantonnay, and the legate have stirred these troubles; so that, between them, we are reduced to go bare-footed, and are so under the sway of our passions, as even to think of introducing strange troops into our kingdom. *L'Eschangeur*, and those of his train, said lately to the said Chantonnay, that his catholic majesty must succour us by sending 10,000 infantry, and 3000 cavalry to our aid. He even pressed the said ambassador to write and procure these troops from Flanders. Chantonnay replied, "that such an order must proceed straight from Spain. The queen-mother is mad with rage, perceiving that the kingdom is partly lost. She knows not what security she can take for herself and her children; for she can expect nothing from the party in the ascendant, except that they will attempt to impose law upon her and the kingdom, a thing which she believes appertains only to her son. *L'Eschangeur* understands nothing, and perceives nothing; it is not possible for any man to conduct himself worse than he does. He knows not to what saint to vow himself; and in these negotiations he is turned by every wind. The said prince de Condé is at the head of from 7000

[1] The League of Peronne.

to 8000 horse; and such is the disposition here, that without the great favour of God, it will not be long before we come to a hard encounter."

In this curious missive, Mary Stuart is alluded to as "*le gentilhomme*," and the Guises as "*les parents du gentilhomme*;" and the writer states, "*qu'ils gastent tout par leur obstination.*" He then continues to inform the bishop that a cabinet courier, named Carbonnières, had been arrested by the admiral de Coligny, near to Orleans; when, in the packet of letters addressed to the bishop of Limoges, they found the copy of a letter written by that bishop to a person whose name is illegible, "*dont ils ont fait leur choux gras pour y avoir trouvé des nouvelles de l'Eschangeur.* Catherine's secretary continues his gossiping despatch by giving a recital of the froward, and unstatesmanlike manner in which the king of Navarre demeaned himself. He says, "the said *l'Eschangeur* had not seen the letter written by you, and intercepted at Orleans; for its perusal would only have embittered his temper; as it indeed happened, when Chantonnay told him that you had said to his Catholic majesty, that he was growing insolent, though he pretends not to show his displeasure. I know that this said ambassador conceals nothing from *l'Eschangeur*, nor *l'Eschangeur* from the ambassador. To-day, when the matter was debated, whether we should accept from his catholic majesty the said 10,000 men and 3000 horse, the queen said, that to do so, would be to proclaim the Catholic king, king of France. Incontinently, the said, *Eschangeur* departed straight, and reported the queen's words to Chan-

tonnay, at which the queen-mother feels annoyed, doubting not that the said ambassador will transmit her observation to his majesty."

Antoine's political and religious apostacy was satirized in ballads and lampoons innumerable. Every weakness was ridiculed: and his shameful treatment of his consort elicited the keenest traits of satire. Mademoiselle de Rouet shared the king's unenviable notoriety; and her name was posted with his in scandalous publicity, from one end of France to the other. In a song, composed by the Huguenot troopers of Condé's army, and sung in the streets of Orleans, amongst other comparisons, Antoine was likened to Julian the Apostate, and the refrain and chorus of each verse of the sonnet was "*Caillette qui tourne sa jaquette!*" *Caillette* being their favourite epithet for the king of Navarre, whose capricious veerings, from Rome to Calvin, from Calvin to Luther, and back again, as a very devoted son of the holy Roman church, challenged their mocking irony.

CHAPTER VI.

Position of the queen of Navarre after her return into Béarn—Jeanne makes her entry into Pau—Progress of the reformation in Béarn—Illness of the prince of Navarre—Letter of queen Jeanne to Catherine de Medici—The parliament of Paris decrees the penalties of treason to the Huguenot leaders—The prince de Condé is exempted therefrom—Queen Jeanne publishes letters patent, permitting the exercise of the reformed faith throughout her dominions—She augments the fortifications of Béarn—Anger of Antoine de Bourbon—He despatches his secretary Boulogne into Béarn—Boulogne's errand—The queen orders Boulogne's arrest and imprisonment—The name of the king of Navarre is omitted in the prayers used by the reformed churches—Queen Jeanne remonstrates against this omission—Reply sent to the queen by Théodore de Bèze—The king of Navarre is wounded at the siege of Rouen—Particulars relating to his illness and death—His funeral obsequies—Grief of the queen—She retires to Orthez—Receives letters of condolence from the prince and princess de Condé and others—Jeanne nominates the viscount de Rohan to be lieutenant-general of Béarn—She issues a medal—Battle of Dreux—Submission of the towns captured by the Huguenots to the government—Siege of Orleans—Assassination of the duke de Guise—The admiral de Coligny is accused of the crime—His defence—Anecdote of queen Jeanne—The king of Spain nominates an ambassador to the court of Pau—His mission—Proposes an alliance between Jeanne d'Albret and Don Carlos, prince of the Asturias, or with don John of Austria—Deportment of the queen—Correspondence of the Spanish envoys—The

queen issues letters'-patent interdicting the Romish faith throughout her dominions—She confiscates the temporalities of the clergy—She burns the images, and confiscates the treasures at Lescar—Correspondence of the ambassador d'Escurra, with Philip's secretary of state, Errasso—Tumults at Lescar and Morlas—Interview of queen Jeanne with Escurra—Details of the audience—Queen Jeanne sends to Geneva for the minister Merlin—Her letter to Jansana—The bishop of Lescar is reprimanded by the cardinal d'Armagnac—His letter to the queen of Navarre—Its effect—Jeanne's reply—Designs of king Philip and the pope respecting the queen of Navarre.

THE life of Jeanne d'Albret after her return from her sojourn at the court of France, took a new and higher development. From this period her career of fame commences. The difficulties which she had to encounter were sufficient to daunt, and paralyze a spirit undaunted even as her own. When she returned to assume the government of her hereditary principality, Jeanne possessed not a single friend from whom she could seek succour and counsel. Her husband had become her most bitter persecutor; and she was deprived of her son. Catherine de Medici, who, for the sake of the power which she then believed Jeanne exercised over the mind of Antoine de Bourbon, had once conciliated and flattered her, now treated her with disdain, and repeatedly sent the queen word that if she wished to retain the favour of king Charles, she must conform to the religion recognized at court. The steady perseverance shown by Jeanne in the faith which she had deliberately accepted, became a tacit reproach to Catherine for her own convenient latitude in religious matters; the queen-regent abhorred a character at once consistent and open; it was an anomaly she could not fathom, but which, nevertheless, she persecuted with

rancour. Queen Jeanne's frankness of speech disconcerted the astute Catherine; and sentiments, which the queen would willingly, and indeed intended to veil amid the flowery mazes of rhetoric, were frequently brought to a premature revelation by some apt comment, or word from the lips of the queen of Navarre.

When Jeanne retired into Béarn, the marshal de Montluc with an army animated with fanatical animosity against the so called sectarians, hovered on the French frontier of her dominions; on the Spanish border the duke de Alburquerque, viceroy of Navarre, commanded a formidable body of troops—veterans of the renowned armies of Charles V, who had all signalized their zeal against heresy during the religious warfare in Germany. These armies waited but a word from the monarchs of France and Spain to cross the frontiers, and to wrest from Jeanne the sovereignty of Béarn. To render the queen's position, at this period, even more critical, pope Pius IV. menaced her dominions with interdict; while her name appeared on the rolls of those cited before the terrible tribunal of the inquisition. The inhabitants of Béarn, faithful to their princes, and devoted to their reformed ritual, welcomed the queen with rapture; religious feuds, however, desolated Jeanne's sovereignty of Lower Navarre, where the Romish faith was dominant; and the disaffection of a portion of her subjects considerably augmented the queen's peril.

The courageous heart of queen Jeanne rose as she contemplated the dangers which beset her. Persecution, instead of inducing her to relinquish the religion

which she had adopted equally by choice, and by conviction, rendered her only the more steadfast in upholding the doctrines of reform. While Philip of Spain, and the princes of Guise strove to crush the reformation by sanguinary edicts, and by overpowering armies, Jeanne gloried in beholding the pre-eminence which the pure ritual she professed had obtained over the kingdoms of Europe. England, Denmark, Sweden, a considerable number of the states of Germany, and of the Low Countries, had thrown off the yoke of Rome. The victorious arms of the gallant Condé appeared on the verge of rescuing France also from the thraldom of the papacy. With enthusiasm, Jeanne recalled the noble firmness displayed by her mother, queen Marguerite, in the cause of religion: the first princess of any royal house, who embraced the principles of the reformation, Marguerite had, courageously, encountered the persecutions of the Sorbonne and the universities; and that at a period when doubt, and a lingering reverence for the ancient forms, reigned in the minds of even the promulgators of the "new doctrines" themselves. Inspired with laudable emulation, queen Jeanne resolved not to forsake the faith she deemed to be truth, when the example set by that revered mother had brought forth so noble a return; and many princes rendered homage to the belief, which Marguerite, once the only one of her royal order, had professed. To Elizabeth, queen of England, the Protestants of the continent looked for support, succour, and counsel. The power of Philip II. was, at this period, and for many subsequent years, almost supreme over continental

Europe. By matrimonial alliances, or by the ties of kindred, he dominated, as his Imperial father had before done, over the cabinets of the civilized world.

The sixteenth century, is pre-eminently the era presenting the most dazzling combination of female regnal talent; all these fair rulers, however, Philip appears to have taken malicious pleasure in discomfiting, or in tyrannizing over, did they happen to hold delegated authority from the crown of Spain. In England, Elizabeth reigned with glory; the only sovereign of Europe, who successfully defied Philip's thraldom. In France, Catherine de Medici wielded her son's sceptre; but, at this period, more as the viceroy of king Philip, than as an independent sovereign. In the Low Countries, Marguerite, duchess of Parma, Philip's illegitimate sister, administered that sovereignty with able rule. Portugal was governed with consummate ability by the dowager-queen, Catherine, sister of the emperor, and aunt of king Philip, as regent for her grandson, Sebastian I. Jeanne d'Albret ranked in power as the fifth sovereign-princess of Europe; though, perhaps, not one of her crowned sisterhood had to contend with foes so overwhelming, or with difficulties apparently so insurmountable, as herself. The heartless treatment which Jeanne experienced, and the perils that she had so narrowly escaped, admonished her that her safety, and her sovereign dignity, depended upon her own able conduct. She thenceforth devoted herself with enthusiasm to the high mission which she believed was assigned to her. Jeanne's domestic ties had been cruelly severed; and she was compelled to regard as her greatest

enemy, the husband upon whom she had bestowed the hand and the heritage contested by so many princes. In her desolation, the queen looked for comfort from the ministers of her religion: the stern asceticism of their doctrines, fell with consoling power upon her spirit. The joys and the amenities of life seemed to hold no place in the struggle before her; and by self-denial and rigid discipline, the queen prepared herself for the arduous future. The contrast between the destinies of Marguerite d'Angoulême and those of her daughter, cannot fail to inspire wonder. The one, cradled from her birth in the luxury and splendour of the most magnificent court of Europe; prosperous, and revered by courtiers, and men of letters; omnipotent, almost, in her influence over the sovereign—beautiful, gracious, and fascinating. The other, oppressed, and deserted by her nearest kindred; maintaining her rank by her invincible strength of character; stern, of austere morals and carriage, and manifesting rigid devotion in religious matters. Yet the character of each of these princesses was adapted to the exigencies of her destiny: Jeanne was born to command; to become the life and support of a powerful faction; and to lead, with a tenacity of purpose and of intellect which disdained the very notion of failure. Marguerite, with her literary gifts, and persuasive eloquence, often stood in the character of a mediator between her brother and his people: "She won all hearts," says Brantôme, "by her most gracious speech."

The martial spirit of her ancestress Catherine d'Albret,[1]

[1] Catherine de Foix, queen of Navarre on the decease of her brother,

and the political capacity of her grandmother, Louise de Savoye, seem to have united in Jeanne's character. On all points, she bore a closer resemblance to the duchess d'Angoulême, than to her brilliant, and gifted mother. The early training of her youthful years; and the contest which she presumed to maintain with her royal uncle, relative to her union with the duke of Cleves, had not been without pernicious effect on the softer traits of her character. After her marriage, the miserable vacillation displayed by the husband of her choice, so degrading to his royal rank, roused the spirit of peremptory command in Jeanne's bosom, which under happier auspices might, perhaps, have slumbered. Antoine de Bourbon had finally wounded, and outraged her feelings as a wife, a mother, and a sovereign princess; for such offence Jeanne deemed that there could be no forgiveness on her part; and in measure as the king of Navarre pledged himself more positively to the Spanish faction; the queen, to demonstrate her disapprobation, daily lavished signal marks of favour on the cause of reform. "To obtain for all men liberty of conscience, I am minded to do good battle, and not to relax my efforts. The cause is so holy and sacred, that I believe God will strengthen me by his mighty power; and although I may not at once avouch my full and entire sentiments,

king Gaston Phœbus, was the daughter, and eventually sole heiress of Gaston, prince of Viana, and of Madelaine, sister of Louis XI., king of France. Catherine was born in 1469: she married Jean d'Albret in 1494, and became the mother of Henry, king of Navarre, father of Jeanne d'Albret, in 1503. Queen Catherine died at Mont de Marsan, A.D. 1516, at the age of 47.

I will conduct myself with such dexterous energy, so as greatly to aid by my endeavours, the common cause, to the glory of the Eternal, and the public weal; for it is high time to quit the land of Egypt, to traverse the Red Sea, and to rescue the church of Christ from amid the ruins of that throne of all pride, unclean Babylon!" wrote Jeanne, to her friend and adviser, the viscount de Gourdon.[1]

Surrounded by a troop of valiant men-at-arms, queen Jeanne made her triumphant entry into the castle of Pau. There, under the shadow of the princely banners of Navarre and Béarn, the queen recovered her health; and applied herself with unwearied perseverance to to promote the pacification of Lower Navarre; and to suppress the tumultuous assemblies which aggravated the popular discontent. The Huguenots of Guyenne and Languedoc maintained their defiant attitude; and the king's lieutenants, Montluc and de Burie, still perpetrated appalling massacres; but despite their cruel zeal, the cause of reform flourished. Numbers of the persecuted escaped over the frontiers, and sought refuge for their lives in Béarn. Jeanne gave them compassionate welcome; she furnished them with food, and with every necessary comfort at her sole expense; and she, moreover, assured the refugees of her protection, though, as she well knew, at great risk to the safety of her dominions.

Soon after Jeanne's arrival at Pau, Catherine de Medici addressed a letter to her, praying the queen to use her influence over Condé, to induce him to lay

[1] Lettre de Jeanne d'Albret, au viscomte de Gourdon. MS. Bibl. Roy. Vallant, Portef. I. p. 294—Inedited.

down arms, and to accept the propositions which, in conjunction with the Guises, and the king of Navarre, she was preparing to tender to him. Civil war now desolated every province of the kingdom. The Protestant population of France, so easily intimidated during the reign of Francis I, and so obedient to the smallest indication vouchsafed to them of the will of their former patroness, Marguerite d'Angoulême, now boldly demanded toleration, and permission to erect churches, wherever the prevalence of their opinions rendered a place consecrated for worship desirable. The vacillating policy pursued by the government, in its issue of edicts and counter-edicts,[1]—at one time granting those concessions, which, if they had been honestly carried out, would have restored concord throughout the country; at another, annulling the boon conferred, under the pressure of temporary embarrassment, exasperated the people, and led them to place confidence, neither in the promises, nor in the acts of their rulers. Until the period when the queen-regent appealed to the queen of Navarre, Catherine had trembled equally at the dark and insolent menaces of Philip's agents, and before the threats of Condé. One party possessed the allegiance of the priesthood, and of the Catholic potentates of

[1] The edict of the 17th of January, 1561, given at St. Germain-en-Laye, granted toleration, and places for public assembly to the Huguenots. The violation of this celebrated edict was the cause of the subsequent civil war. Counter-edicts were issued by the court, July 31st, 1561, and August 16th. The parliament of Paris, however, had refused to register the edict of January. "*Non possumus, nec debemus*," said the members by acclamation. The edict was eventually registered, under stringent protest, by the absolute command of the queen-regent, and the threats of the young king.

Europe; it had also at command the censures of Rome, the treasures of the New World, the disciplined forces of the mighty Charles, so recently deceased, and the *prestige* of tradition and orthodox faith. The popular party, enlisted the vigorous intellects of the age; and the principles of the reformation were now defended by the sword of soldiers, such as Condé, Coligny, d'Andelot, la Rochefoucauld, and Montgommery; and not as in the two previous reigns, solely by the eloquent discourses of the learned. Hundreds of noble ladies contributed their silent, but not less potent influence; so that there existed scarcely a single princely house throughout the realm, which counted not one of its members, or even more, amid the ranks of Condé's forces. Queen Catherine's two principal ladies of honour, the duchesses de Montpensier and d'Uzès, made no secret of their preference for reform. Both these princesses were women of energy and masculine understanding; and well skilled in ancient divinity and classical lore. Catherine confided in madame de Montpensier, as much as she trusted any one; but, as the policy pursued throughout by the queen-regent, consisted of dexterous combination and unscrupulous use of present opportunity, rather than systematic design in politics, the advice of the duchess profited her little.

The compulsion which the king of Navarre and the princes of Guise had presumed to use, in compelling the return of king Charles to Paris, was considered by the queen as so decisive a proof of their superior power in the state, that she at once resolved on leaguing herself with the Roman Catholic party. The princes of Guise,

and Antoine de Bourbon were profuse in expression of exaggerated deference to her authority, after the king's return to Paris. Reassured, therefore, by their submissive attitude, and by the comparative tranquillity that now reigned in Paris, owing to the preponderance of the Romish party, the queen finally gave her adherence to the dominant faction, which maintained the faith of her ancestors—a belief which she had only feigned to neglect, when its profession seemed to menace her authority.

Catherine was now at liberty to demonstrate the dislike she instinctively felt for Jeanne d'Albret. The letter she addressed to that princess was drawn in haughty terms: she informed the queen of the proposed interview with Condé at Toury; and admonished her, as a faithful subject of king Charles, to use the influence that she so notoriously possessed over the mind of the prince, to induce him to make his submission. The daughter of Marguerite d'Angoulême, however, was not to be intimidated by disdainful words; the queen, moreover, had totally lost the good opinion of the austere Jeanne, by her faithless denial of her own commands, when, considering herself in extremity of peril, she had invoked the assistance of the Huguenot party. The sense of another wrong—a deep and personal one—burned angrily at this period in Jeanne's bosom. The young prince of Navarre was seized, while at St. Germain, with virulent small-pox. For some weeks his life had been considered in imminent danger. Throughout his sickness, the prince had called piteously for his mother; but the queen was then flying before enemies

who were instigated in their persecution by her husband. As soon as the queen heard of prince Henry's illness, she dispatched an urgent entreaty, that he might be sent back to her maternal care. The king of Navarre and the queen-regent, however, were too wary to grant this petition: they regarded the young prince as a precious hostage in their hands, knowing that Jeanne's actions must necessarily be fettered, so long as they held her son and heir in safe custody. The queen of Navarre, finding that she could prevail nothing by her entreaty, next wrote to request that prince Henry might be committed to the care of Rénée, duchess of Ferrara,[1] of whose friendly feeling towards herself, Jeanne had had many proofs. As the duchess was mother-in-law to the duke de Guise, the queen's prayer was granted, and the young prince was happily transferred from the guardianship of mademoiselle de Rouet, to that of the admirable and gifted duchesse Rénée.

Jeanne's mood, therefore, when she received Catherine's command to employ her good offices with Condé, was not very placable. The queen, doubtless, at many periods of her life, aggravated the malevolence of her enemies by her unguarded freedom of speech, and her disdain of conventional courtesies. Her letter to Catherine de Medicis greatly incensed the regent: its purport is as follows:—

[1] Rénée, daughter of Louis XII. The duchess, on the decease of her husband, the duke Ercole I. of Ferrara, returned to France, and took up her residence in the castle of Montargis, where, despite the commands of the privy-council, she professed the reformed faith, and protected the Calvinist ministers.

QUEEN JEANNE, TO CATHERINE DE MEDICI, QUEEN OF FRANCE.

MADAME,

It has pleased your majesty to write to me by Bladré[1] (whom I sent on a mission to the king, my husband) desiring me to counsel the prince, my brother, to lay down arms. I hold, madame, little communication with the said prince; and, moroever, as on reflection it appeared to me that it would be unbecoming on my part to offer advice to so many personages of more competent understanding than myself, you will be pleased, madame, to hold me excused, if I have not done more in this affair than to commission a cavalier, who was about to join the standard of the said prince, to inform him of that, which it has pleased you to command me. To this message, madame, the prince has returned me such an answer, that it seems to me that he has no other desire than to serve and obey you in all things.[2] I assure you, madame, that I lament deeply as any loyal subject of the king can do, the unhappy differences in which you are involved. I will even confess to you that I should dread to behold their effect upon your health, were it not that I believe that the continual prayer which is made for you will be granted by our gracious God.

Madame, you were pleased to promise me the post of gentleman of the chamber, vacant by the decease of Monsieur de —— (*name illegible*) for M. d'Audaux,[3] as your majesty may perhaps remember. Nevertheless, madame, another has been recently nominated to the office; and your promise, upon which I steadily relied, remains unfulfilled. I

[1] A courier.

[2] The prince reiterated his assertion that Catherine and her sons, were captives in the hands of MM. de Guise and the king of Navarre. He professed his willing desire to obey the queen, when her majesty was released from the control of the triumvirate.

[3] Claude de Levis, baron d'Audaux, sénéchal of Béarn.

entreat you very humbly, madame, to recall your promise and to fulfil it; failing the which, you will cause me to receive the most cruel vexation, as I have spoken assuredly, and even boastingly to others, of my credit with you in this matter, which, it seems, that I have forfeited only because I felt reluctant to importune you earlier on the subject. I entreat you, therefore, madame, not to allow those to triumph who would rejoice in proclaiming the little influence which I possess with your majesty. The messenger I send with this, if it pleases you to hear him, will tell you how the matter stands, and the remedy which I propose.

I commend to your care, madame, my husband and my son; especially I would remind you of the promise which you made to me, not to command my said son to do anything opposed to the principles in which I have caused him to be educated, Meantime, until I have the honour to offer to you my personal service, I will pray God, madame, to grant you a long and happy life, with every satisfaction which she could desire for you, who subscribes herself,

Your very humble and very obedient sister and servant,

JEHANNE.

The superscription of the letter is, "To the queen, my Sovereign Lady."[1]

Queen Catherine had disavowed her letters, and her appeals to Condé to arm for the rescue of *la mère et le fils*, and Jeanne was at little pains to conceal the contempt which she felt for such double dealing. The proposed interview between Catherine and Condé took place in the presence of the king of Navarre; but resulted in nothing. The king of Navarre overwhelmed

[1] This letter is in the possession of M. Louis Paris, Rue d'Angoulême, St. Honoré, Paris, who has courteously forwarded a copy of it to the author.

his valiant brother with reproaches; but failed to move Condé's determination to effect the exile from court of the Guise faction, and to obtain toleration for the Protestant churches, ere he laid down arms.

On the 26th of June, 1562, the parliament published a decree, declaring the Huguenot chieftains, and all who had share in the capture of the towns seized by Condé, guilty of high treason, and subject to the penalties inflicted by the laws of the realm upon traitors to their sovereign.[1] As the prince de Condé, in his numerous manifestoes, thought proper to treat the king and the queen-mother as captives, in the hands of Antoine de Bourbon and the princes of Guise, the parliament retaliated and exempted the prince from the pains of treason, on the supposition that he was an unwilling participator in the enormities committed by the Huguenots.

Queen Jeanne, during these transactions, had been meditating most important reforms within her principality of Béarn, over which she reigned as sovereign-princess. When legislating for Gascony, Foix, Lower Navarre, and Albret, Jeanne had to appeal, in contested cases, to the decision of her suzerain, the king of France. Free, therefore, as regarded her principality, to follow the dictates of her will, the queen assembled her council, and published letters patent, authorizing the public celebration of divine service, in conformity with the Protestant ritual. She likewise published an *ordonnance* for the more effectual defence of the principality against Spanish invaders. She caused the fortifications of Navarreins to be strengthened, and the garrison augmented to a

[1] The edict is published in the Mémoires de Condé, t. IV., p. 114.

force of 2,000 men. Seventy large cannons were mounted there, by Jeanne's especial directions; and, moreover, she provided the place with abundant stores of provisions and ammunition. The fortress of Bayonne was also thoroughly repaired, and the garrison changed; also, those of Azenuilas and Orthez were greatly reinforced, by additional supplies of artillery, and by the nomination of efficient commanders. The king of Navarre, meanwhile, watched his consort's proceedings in bewildered amazement. Aghast at her defiance, he seems, for a time, to have been incapable of devising any method of reprisal. The king's wholesome consciousness of his consort's mental prowess, was not even comprehensive enough for her present daring. Jeanne occasionally still addressed letters to her husband, whom she compassionately regarded as one sojourning under blind infatuation in a court, where, in her opinion, "there abided neither safety nor salvation." For fear lest these letters, which doubtless contained stirring counsel, might be intercepted, Jeanne frequently transmitted them under cover to Anne d'Esté, duchesse de Guise, the daughter of her friend and cousin, Rénée de France, duchesse of Ferrara. In an epistle to the duchesse de Guise, Jeanne says, "I pray you, ma cousine, do me the kindness to take care that the letter which I have written to *monsieur mon mari*, falls only into his hands. Do not, therefore, think me importunate, if I address myself in this matter to you, from whom I have often received many tokens of friendship."

The vehement reproaches of the legate, Ste. Croix, at length roused Antoine from his apathy. Condé and

the Huguenot army lay encamped between queen Jeanne and her irritated consort; or Antoine might have proceeded, in person, to avenge the impoverished hierarchy of Béarn. A fear of calling down the legions of the mighty Elizabeth of England upon the southern provinces, prevented the council from "praying that the king of Spain would occupy the principality." The same dread, likewise, restrained the sanguinary advance of Montluc upon Pau. Condé had recently signed a treaty, offensive and defensive, with queen Elizabeth,[1] who promised to aid the cause with men and with subsidies. Elizabeth acknowledged a kindred spirit in the queen of Navarre; and throughout the war she manifested the deepest interest in Jeanne's welfare, and, upon several occasions, afforded her substantial aid. The friendship of Elizabeth stood Jeanne in good stead at this crisis; as, but for her powerful protection, the regent of France and the king of Spain would have obliterated the principality of Béarn from its rank amongst the sovereignties of Europe. King Antoine, therefore, as he could imagine nothing more menacing, despatched one of his secretaries, named Boulogne, upon a secret mission into Béarn. His errand was to protest, in the name of the king of Navarre, against the innovations perpetrated by Jeanne. He was ordered to proceed in the matter with the greatest caution, and to gain, by persuasion, or by bribery, a majority in the approaching assembly of the states of the principality,

[1] The treaty between queen Elizabeth and Condé was signed at Hampton Court, September 20th, 1562. See the treaty, Mém. of Condé, t. III., p. 689.

convoked by the queen. Boulogne's instructions afterwards empowered him to remove all Protestants from offices of state: to interdict the exercise of the reformed worship, throughout queen Jeanne's dominions; and, finally, to require, from every individual holding a public office in the principality, a distinct confession of his adherence to the Romish faith, under pain of banishment and confiscation. Obedience to these mandates, Boulogne was empowered to demand from the queen, the states, and the council, in the name of the king of Navarre, their lord and sovereign. In case of contumacious resistance, Antoine's envoy was authorized, after having employed every personal and private method of persuasion and menace, to call in the aid of the king's lieutenant, the redoubtable marshal de Montluc. Elated by the importance of the functions confided to him, Boulogne set out on his mission. Jeanne, nevertheless, received private intimation to be on her guard respecting the instructions given to Boulogne; and she, therefore, resolved to test them, before she permitted the envoy to approach her capital. She, accordingly, transmitted orders for the detention of Boulogne, as soon as he entered the principality; and directed that his papers should be seized, and forwarded for the inspection of the privy council. Her command was punctually obeyed; and the discomfited envoy, who hoped to play so conspicuous a rôle in Béarn, was placed in safe arrest, until the decision of queen Jeanne was known. The queen's indignation was profound, when, on perusing Boulogne's secret instructions, she read fresh evidence of her husband's disloyal desertion

and ingratitude. In her anger at the persecution which she endured, Jeanne determined to make a salutary demonstration of her sovereign rights, by the punishment of the envoy sent, so perfidiously, to plot the overthrow of her authority. Compelled to regard her husband as her most implacable foe, the queen hesitated not to perform the duty which she believed to be necessary for the safety of her people. She, therefore, signed a warrant, committing Boulogne to the custody of the baron d'Arros, a prisoner for an indefinite period. "By this act," said the queen, "I asserted the power that God had given me over my own subjects, but which I once ceded to my husband, in deference to the obedience which God commands wives to show towards their husbands. But when I perceived that, by this concession, the glory of God and the welfare of my people were outraged, I, without hesitation, exercised my royal rights."[1] Boulogne remained a close prisoner until after the death of king Antoine; and Jeanne appears, against her usual practice, to have used much severity in his case. Probably, as there were many malcontents, even within the limits of her loyal principality, and that the neighbouring states of Foix and Gascony continued in a fever of religious excitement and rebellion against her authority, she deemed it requisite to make an example of one whose treasonable designs had been so notorious.

Although Jeanne felt the deplorable necessity of defending herself against the machinations of her husband, she still paid him great outward respect. His

[1] Vauvilliers, Hist. de Jeanne d'Albret, t. 1.

name was always joined with her own in the prayers of the liturgy, daily recited before her. The queen being informed, about this time, that the ministers throughout France had ceased to mention the king's name in their services, she wrote to remonstrate against this omission to Théodore de Bèze, who exercised apparently, the office of presbyter in chief over the reformed churches. De Bèze responded in his usual self-sufficient style, refusing the queen's request, that Antoine's name might be re-inserted in their liturgy; but yet vouchsafing to give her majesty some hope that the king's perdition was not yet consummated.

"Whilst the king, your husband, madame, manifested the smallest reverence and fear for his God, he was named in our prayers with yourself, in the hope which we cherished that he would gradually profit by our petitions. Even when he had made profane league with the enemies of God, we ceased not earnestly to commend him to mercy in the prayers of our church; and that the more ardently seeing the ruin and misery which his perversion entailed. This continued until he so thoroughly divested himself of all godly restraints, to our very unfeigned regret, that he not only scandalized the church, but, moreover, declared himself chief, and protector of those, whose hands are imbued with the blood of God's children, and who have always professed and gloried in the title of their persecutors and avowed foes. Reflect, madame, I beseech you, and believe, that not without great grief and anguish of mind has this great and grievous omission been decided upon. We were, however, compelled so to act;

for with what colour could we pray against the enemies of God and his church; and afterwards particularly commend to mercy in our prayers one, whom we had been forced to name in the first category?"[1]

The queen made no more efforts to propitiate the stern reformer. The carping spirit so constantly displayed by de Bèze greatly impaired the queen's regard; whose generous mind scorned the censorious insinuations by which the reformer too often sought, in his writings, to avenge himself and his cause. His unjust strictures, likewise, on the conduct of her mother, whose memory was proudly venerated by Jeanne, had offended the queen, and she, consequently, showed him little favour; nor did she manifest any desire that Bèze should assume a pastoral office over her churches in Béarn.

Jeanne, however, was soon to be released from the domestic feuds which so greatly aggravated the sorrow of her position. The king of Navarre was severely wounded at the siege of Rouen, October 25th, 1562; and his subsequent follies, rather than the injuries which he had there received, caused his death on the 17th of the following month of November.

The royal army had opened the campaign against Condé, by the capture of Poitiers, on the 1st day of August. On the 29th of the same month, the town of Bourges surrendered at the summons of the king of Navarre and the duke de Guise. The army next laid siege to Rouen. The garrison was commanded by the count

[1] Lettre de Théodore de Bèze à la reine de Navarre. Mém. de Condé, t. II., p. 359.

de Montgommery, and included three thousand English soldiers, sent by queen Elizabeth to the aid of Condé. The entire contingent furnished by Elizabeth consisted of 6000 men; part of this force garrisoned Havre-de-Grâce, which had been ceded to the queen by Condé, on her Britannic majesty's promise to hold that port until the termination of the war, that it might serve for a sure retreat to the king's persecuted subjects of the reformed faith. The garrison of Rouen made a valiant defence, and constantly refused to surrender. At length, the town was taken by assault on the 26th of October, and abandoned to fire and pillage. Catherine and the young king were present in the camp during the siege operations; and the queen greatly encouraged the troops by her affability, and by the large gratuities which she lavishly promised, as the reward of the capture of Rouen. On the last day but one of the assault, the king of Navarre was wounded while standing in the trenches, by a bullet which penetrated his left shoulder. He was immediately borne to his quarters, and his physicians summoned; but they failed in their endeavours to extract the ball. The king's condition, nevertheless, was not considered dangerous: he was enjoined to keep his bed, and to maintain perfect tranquillity of mind and body. "The physicians have good hope of the cure of M. de Vendôme from the gun-shot wound which he lately received in the left shoulder," writes Chantonnay to his royal master.[1] "The surgeons say that there is no

[1] Lettre de Thomas Perronot à sa majesté Catholique. Mém. de Condé, t. II.

danger. God grant it! One of my people discoursed long with the prince yesterday as he reclined in his bed." This subtle ambassador had, by no means, abjured his evil practises of fomenting discord between queen Jeanne and her husband. In a letter to Philip, dated "from Chartres, September 16, 1562." Chantonnay sends his master the following choice piece of information: "Madame de Vendôme, finding that her designs do not prosper, appears inclined to lay down arms. She has sent to her husband to say that she is now willing to obey him in all matters. She wished to propose some novelty or other for the sanction of the states of Béarn; but the members replied that, being a wife, she could do nothing without the permission of her husband; and, therefore, if her said spouse did not append his assent to whatever transaction she might propose, they would not confirm any of her mandates." The queen had not summoned the states of Béarn to meet since her return from the court of France: nor did the arrest and imprisonment of Boulogne look as if Jeanne was prepared to surrender her conscience, or to obey the commands of a husband, who had forfeited all claims to her confidence and respect.

For some days the king of Navarre continued much in the same condition; but instead of the repose prescribed by his physician, his apartment was the resort of the gayest and most profligate of the courtiers in the train of the queen. Reposing on a low couch, placed near the stove which warmed his chamber, with mademoiselle de Rouet by his side, Antoine de Bourbon passed a great portion

of the day in watching young girls and boys dance to the sound of timbrels; or engage in other sports.[1] The effect of the noise, and the excitement of such a scene upon the shattered nerves of the king may be imagined. When Antoine learned the surrender of Rouen, he insisted upon making his triumphal entry into the town, through the breach in the wall. Accordingly, reclining in his litter, surrounded by a division of the victorious army, the unfortunate Antoine performed his deplorable progress. He was carried in his litter across the battered ramparts, as far as the Hotel de Ville, and then back again to his chamber, where he was consigned to his bed in a fainting fit.

His wound, after this absurd exploit, began, as might be expected, to inflame rapidly, and a burning fever and delirium consumed his strength. Still, mademoiselle de Rouet never quitted the king; and the same scenes of ribald license continued to distract his dying hours. At length, at the solicitation of his first physician, the sieur de Mezières,[2] a Huguenot, whose skill had induced the king of Navarre to retain his services, the bishop of Mende[3] informed the king that his days were numbered. Antoine received the intelligence with resignation; he commanded his chamber to be cleared of the noisy

[1] De Thou, livre 33, p. 434.

[2] Raphaël de Tailleris de la Mezières, and the Calabrian, Vincent de Lauro, were the two household physicians of the king of Navarre. The first was a rigid Lutheran; de Lauro, a bigoted Roman Catholic, who, afterwards taking priestly orders, obtained a cardinal's hat.

[3] Nicholas d'Angui, son of the cardinal Duprat. He was chancellor to king Antoine, and held other offices in that prince's household.

throng of courtiers; and no one to remain, but mademoiselle de Rouet, and his personal attendants.

The same day the king made his will. In that document he bequeathed his stud of horses to the duke de Guise; leaving various small legacies to his servants, and the remainder of his vast wealth to his son Henry.[1] He also wrote a letter to the queen of Navarre, in which he bade her farewell, and solemnly commended their son to her care. He admonished the queen not to visit the court of France; but to watch for the safety of Béarn.[2] Antoine then received a visit from the officious Chantonnay, who, like a spirit of discord, seems to have haunted every scene of carnage and tumult. "The Spanish ambassador," says de Bèze,[3] "coming to visit the king, the latter greatly heated himself in discourse. After the departure of the said ambassador, the king exclaimed, 'that he was beginning to understand the wiles by which he had been deceived; and that if he could only get cured of his wound, he would take heed for the future: nevertheless, he desired that his wife might be admonished to look well after the affairs of her principality.'" Unfortunately, this first Bourbon king, always perceived his errors when too late to retrieve them. Religious matters then harassed the weary and halting spirit of the unhappy prince. He professed the Romish Faith, while his heart inclined towards the ritual he had

[1] Relation de la mort du roy de Navarre. MS., Bibl. Roy., Dupuy, vol. 500, p. 2. This curious document is published in the Mém. de Condé.

[2] De Thou., liv. 33.

[3] Thé. de Bèze. Hist. des Eglises Réformées de France, t. II., p. 665.

so faithlessly abandoned. Lauro, one of his physicians, nevertheless, prevailed upon the king, during the afternoon, to make his confession to an ecclesiastic, who filled the office of judge in the archiepiscopal court of Rouen.

Late on the same evening, queen Catherine entered the king's apartment, to take leave before the departure of the court for Vincennes. She found Antoine plunged in mournful despondency; while the sorrowful faces of those around, showed how grievous had been his plaints of mental and bodily anguish. "Mon frère," said the queen, "you should command some one to read to you." "Madame," replied the unhappy prince, doubtfully, "all around me here are Huguenots." "They are, nevertheless, your servants, monseigneur, and will do as you direct,"[1] responded Catherine. When the queen had taken her departure, Antoine called de Mezières, and bid him read from the book of Job, to which he listened with clasped hands. De Mezières then pronounced a long admonition to the royal penitent, and forcibly set before the eyes of king Antoine the evils of his past career, especially of the last few years of his life, bidding him put away hope of intercession and acceptance, except in the merits of Jesus Christ. "Ah, Raphaël!" exclaimed the dying prince, reproachfully, "I perceive now, indeed, that the hand of death is upon me. Here, for the last twenty years have you served me, and only to-day do you perceive and warn me against the deplorable errors of my life!" The king then made confession of his past sins, and vowed

[1] Bibl. Roy.—Dupuy, vol. 500.

if God restored him to health, that he would cause the gospel to be preached throughout France, according to the Lutheran belief. Another day, the king said to his attendants, "you will report everywhere that the king of Navarre is become a Huguenot, being now better advised. Never mind, if so it is believed; as I am firmly resolved to live or die in accordance with the confession of Luther."[1] Thus, for the fifth time, did king Antoine change his belief. Finding himself gradually growing weaker, the king eagerly requested to be removed from the infected atmosphere of Rouen. With restless pertinacity, he insisted upon going down the river, as far as the village of St. Maur-les-Fossés. His sufferings from fever, and the inflammation of his wound were intense. He was frequently seized with fits of shivering, which terminated, after a few hours, in an access of delirium. The thought of his consort seems often to have weighed heavily on his mind; and he several times expressed disappointment, that she had not set out to visit him in his extremity. De Mezières was reading to his suffering master one evening, the chapter in St. Paul's epistles, where the apostle exhorts wives to be obedient to their own husbands. Antoine made a gesture for his physician to pause; he then hastily said, "Raphaël, you perceive that God commands women to pay obedience to their husbands?" "It is true, sire," replied de Mezières; "but Holy Scripture also says, husbands, love your wives!"[2]

[1] Particularités de la mort du roy de Navarre. Bibl. Roy., Dupuy, vol. 500.

[2] Ibid.

About the 14th day of November, at night, Antoine was carried from his sick chamber, and placed in a boat on the Seine, to proceed to St. Maur. He was accompanied by his brother, the cardinal de Bourbon, and the prince de la Roche sur Yon. The movement of the boat greatly increased the torment of his wounds. He suffered during the night with sickness and convulsions; towards morning, he faintly desired Raphaël, at once his faithful physician and chaplain, to recite the prayers for those in extremity. All on board knelt round the dying prince, excepting the cardinal de Bourbon, and the prince de la Roche sur Yon, who stood aside covered. When the prayers terminated, the cardinal de Bourbon was heard to murmur to himself, "these are indeed true prayers and orisons, and not what I supposed; they believe as we do."

When the boat reached Andelis, it was evident that the last moments of the king of Navarre were at hand. He was carried on shore, and every remedy used to allay his sufferings. About three hours before he expired, Antoine was roused from the stupor preceding dissolution by the voice of some person beside him, who exclaimed, "Jesus Christ died for you!" Antoine opened his eyes, and perceiving the strange figure of a monk, leaning over his couch, said, "who are you, who thus address me. I die a Christian!" "Sire," interposed Mezières; "hear him. He is a pious and worthy man."

The intruder was a noted Jacobin monk, who had been sent for by the cardinal de Bourbon, to sooth the last moments of the dying king. Antoine uttered a

fervent, amen! when the monk concluded his exhortation; he then addressed a few words to Raphaël, and to an Italian valet-de-chambre. Soon after, a paroxysm of convulsions ensued, during which the king expired, in the forty-fourth year of his age.[1]

The comments which Antoine's two subtle tempters, the cardinal de Ste. Croix and the ambassador Chantonnay, make, on his decease, in their despatches to Spain, are characteristic. Chantonnay writes: "Having been informed of the decease of monsieur de Vendôme (whom may God assoilize!) which happened at nine o'clock yesterday evening, I would not delay in making this event known to your majesty. I have not yet heard whether the said sieur ended his days as a good Catholic; nevertheless, I think so, as monsieur le cardinal, his brother, was with him." Prosper de Ste. Croix, in an epistle to the cardinal Borroméo, flippantly says, after announcing the fact of the king's demise: "The Portuguese[2] is just returned from Spain: from the minutes of the resolution of the (Spanish) privy-council which he brings, I think it a most lucky event that he found the king of Navarre dead, because I believe that had not this event happened, the refusals (of his Spanish majesty) would have worked a great revolution in the mind of that prince."[3]

The mortal remains of the king of Navarre where

[1] Bibl. Roy., MSS., Dupuy, vol 500.

[2] A courier, whom the nuncio sent on special missions.

[3] Lettres du Nonce Prosper de Ste. Croix. Aymon, Actes synodaux de France, t. I.

abandoned to the care of de Mezières, who caused them to be carefully embalmed, and placed in a leaden coffin until instructions should be issued by the court for their interment. The cardinal de Bourbon repaired to Vincennes the day after his brother's decease; so anxious was he to profit by the alteration which that event produced in the position of parties at court. Antoine's funeral obsequies were celebrated some weeks after his decease in the cathedral church of St. George, at Vendôme, where his tomb and monumental effigy are still to be seen. The cardinal de Bourbon officiated as chief mourner. Never have the faults of any prince been more fatally visited to his own discomfort and ruin than those of Antoine de Bourbon. A faithless husband, and a fickle friend, no wife, child, or ally shed a tear over his untimely grave. With gifts eminently calculated to gain the heart of men: brave, chivalrous, and accomplished, Antoine's instability of character, his shallow wit, and cold affections alienated all. His obsequies were celebrated in obscurity and haste; his funeral cortège traversed a country in arms, and a prey to fearful devastation; while the notes of his requiem were drowned in the din of battle, wherein his valiant brother was a second time taken prisoner by the duke de Guise. Queen Jeanne dare not even nominate ambassadors from her household to be present at the funeral solemnities of her royal spouse; for no security of person, even for the performance of this sacred duty, could be given in the face of hostile armies preparing for conflict. Innumerable were the pasquinades, and indecent satires which commemorated the demise

of Antoine, the first Bourbon king: his project of divorcing Jeanne d'Albret to espouse Mary Stuart, his simplicity in crediting the egregious deceptions of the legates, and the Spanish ambassador, his discreditable intrigue with *la belle de Rouet*,[1] and his unfortunate instability of purpose are all noted in every variety of verse.

The intelligence of her husband's decease was brought to queen Jeanne at Pau, by a courier despatched from Andelis by the cardinal de Bourbon. Jeanne deeply mourned her loss: her wrongs, and the cruel insults to which she had been subject, were forgotten by her. The grave shed its all-atoning influence on Antoine's memory, and Jeanne remembered only the husband of her early love. Jeanne retired to her favourite castle of Orthez,[2] there to hold her mourning state; and for some time she maintained the most rigorous seclusion. Austere, indeed, must have been the religious exercises and the acts of self-denial, by which the queen sought to control her grief. During her retirement, the queen received letters of condolence from the prince and the princess de Condé, the count and countess de la Rochefoucauld,[3] from the sieur Fumée, a member of the parliament of Paris; and from the prince of Amalfi. The letter

[1] The gallant inclinations of the king of Navarre were so well appreciated, that it used to be said of him, "Pour t'assurer de ce prince assure-toi de sa dame."

[2] The ruins of queen Jeanne's apartments in the castle of Orthez, are still shown to travellers. The castle of Orthez was especially called by the Béarnois, "Le château de la royne Jeanne," from the queen's well-known preference for that abode.

[3] Charlotte de Roye, sister of the princesse de Condé. The countess de la Rochefoucauld was a lady of great piety and learning.

written by the countess de la Rochefoucauld, is most singular in its import; and suggests grounds of consolation, finding little sympathy, we may suppose, with the practical and unimaginative mind of Jeanne d'Albret. She says:

THE COUNTESS DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD TO QUEEN JEANNE.

MADAME,

Doubtless the evil which has befallen you is great, the grief just, the loss irreparable. To be severed from one's better half, to be separated from one's head, from one's own flesh and blood; is there not enough in this to afflict, and to fear? Yes, truly; nor can there be heart so hard as not to melt at so grievous a loss; so that I would even that my tears might mingle with your own, and fall together on the sepulchre of your deceased king, that we might give evidence of our grief, and relieve the emotion inherent to flesh and blood on so doleful an occasion. But what of this body, which is given for a life short and calamitous? What regret ought we to feel for the loss of a thing which brings us nothing but sorrow and disappointment, and which hinders us often from gathering the fruit of a more holy life? Let all of us, therefore, that be married, live as though we were not! Let us not even in thought, attach to corruptible flesh the divine image and semblance in which we were created; let us detach the spirit from that gross and material substance; so that despite the body and its belongings, we may take possession of the things to come, over which death has no power. You will then, madame, perceive, while thinking to have lost the king, your spouse, that you will enjoy his society a hundredfold more than if he were living with you. For who will now prevent you from speaking to him, reasoning with him, and conversing with him as long as you please, without fear that monsieur and madame may come to

whisper in his ear, to pull him by the robe, to divert his attention from you? It is now, madame, that he will explain to you the reason of his long absence, of his change of life, and of his other affairs. It is now, madame, if he has committed any fault in respect to yourself, that he will confess it, making you all his satisfaction that the regard between you requires. In short, madame, it seems to me that the body cannot prevent you from having pleasure in his presence, seeing that his spirit of delusion, (*son vieil esprit,*) being also cast aside (with the flesh) he will for ever be united to you; the which ought to be greatly consoling, for God has left his spirit free, so that you may commune together often as it may please you. If you receive and heartily accept this belief, I shall esteem you happy, and myself also, madame, if I have the felicity of remaining your majesty's very humble, and very obedient servant,

CHARLOTTE DE ROYE.[1]

One of Jeanne's first acts, on emerging from her retirement, was to appoint her cousin, the viscount de Rohan, lieutenant-general of Béarn, and its dependencies, during the minority of her son, prince Henry. Jeanne next ordered a medal to be struck and distributed amongst her people; its device and emblem indicated her determination to surmount every difficulty. On one side of the medal, the arms of Béarn were blazoned with the motto of Albret:—*sum id quod sum, &c.* The reverse bore the device of a flame, with the words: —*aut faciet, aut inveniet viam.*

Queen Jeanne was thirty-four years old when she became a widow. From the time that she bade fare-

[1] Lettre de madame la comtesse de la Rochefoucauld à la Royne de Navarre, Mém. de Condé t. IV.

well to the king of Navarre, in Paris, she seems to have had a presentiment that she should never more behold her husband. She too well knew the unscrupulous daring of the dominant parties at court, to doubt that the life of the nominal chief of the triumvirate would be sacrificed upon the first symptoms of his vacillation in the cause which he had been prevailed upon to support; "for," says le Grain, "this princess was a woman of great discernment." It was always doubted by queen Jeanne, whether the bullet, fatal to her husband's life, was fired from the ramparts of Rouen; or whether it proceeded from a hand which Antoine had recently grasped in friendship. From the very earliest days of her widowhood, the queen protested that she would never more enter into the bonds of matrimony. Her life had been embittered by Antoine's neglect, her power, as a sovereign princess curtailed; and her fine and noble spirit, so susceptible of good in its aspirations, had been wounded, and its womanly impulses deadened. Outraged and disappointed in her hopes of domestic happiness, Jeanne, concentrating those admirable talents with which nature had endowed her, became the dauntless and politic princess, against whose genius such a character as that of Antoine de Bourbon, became helpless as a straw tossed on the waves of the ocean.

The hopes, meantime, of the Huguenots, suffered a great reverse. The capture of Bourges and Rouen had been followed by the battle of Dreux, fought December 20th, 1562, which resulted in the complete triumph of the Roman Catholic party, and the capture of the prince of Condé. As some compensation for this disaster, the

constable de Montmorency remained a prisoner in the hands of the Huguenots. He was conducted to Orleans, and placed in the keeping of the princess de Condé, as a hostage for the safety of her gallant consort.

Rapid, from thenceforth, was the progress of the royal arms; most of the towns captured by Condé, and his adherents, submitted to their sovereign. Orleans alone refused; and boldly defied the menaces of Guise, and the plausible remonstrances of queen Catherine. During the month of February, 1563, the duke de Guise laid siege to the town, before which he was most basely assassinated, by Jean Mérey Poltrot, a Huguenot, in the service of the baron de Soubise. Thus, in little more than three years from the decease of Francis II., Catherine de Medici found herself delivered from the formidable competition of the two princes, who had menaced her authority, and coerced her will. Humanly speaking, the queen-regent appeared at the summit of fortune: Guise and Bourbon both prostrate in an untimely grave; the first prince of the blood, Antoine's son, in his minority; the heir of Guise yet in his boyhood; Condé a prisoner; the Huguenot faction apparently vanquished; Montmorency, the veteran constable, in captivity; nothing seemed powerful enough to resist the omnipotent fiat of Catherine de Medici. Nevertheless, a cloud rested on the horizon, the harbinger of woes more terrible than had yet riven the ancient monarchy. When Catherine, in the fulness of sovereign power, seated herself on the throne of St. Louis, without a competitor who presumed to aspire to her authority, the bloody feud between the houses of

Coligny and of Guise, fostered by Philip of Spain, chief of the league of Peronne, already shadowed forth those dark scenes of anarchy, which finally swept the crown from the grasp of the royal line of Francis I. The admiral de Coligny, was accused of having caused the assassination of the duke de Guise. Protestant historians invariably and fully acquit the admiral of this crime, doubtless from a partial or imperfect perusal of documentary evidence; their admiration of his valour and military skill, rendering them oblivious of, or determined to veil, his misdeeds. Yet, in the manifestoes published by the admiral, and presented to the queen, Coligny, while denying that he had either bribed, or incited Poltrot to commit the crime, distinctly avows that he was aware of the design, and knew the motive of the assassin's desire to visit the camp of the duke de Guise before Orleans. His own words attest, moreover, that he sent Poltrot to the camp as a spy, after having heard him make revelation of his purpose when there: "the admiral takes his honour to witness, that when the said Poltrot told him aforetimes that he should be glad to take the life of the seigneur de Guise, the said admiral replied nothing to the observation, nor said he anything in favour, or deprecation of the deed."[1] If the admiral did not actually compass the assassination of his potent rival, surely he was morally and intentionally guilty of the crime, when he permitted the assassin to depart, without a word of warning to the intended victim. Poltrot all along affirms that Coligny was ac-

[1] Déclaration de M. l'admiral quant à son faict particulier, etc., du 5ème de Mai, 1563. Mém. de Condé, t. IV., p. 339.

cessory to the deed; nor can it be wondered that his words met with belief, after such an assertion as the above; or, as the admiral calls it, "a defence," which was circulated throughout France. This circumstance, though it cannot palliate the subsequent atrocious assassination of Coligny, by the son of the murdered Guise, yet diminishes, somewhat, the guilt of the reckless animosity evinced by the house of Lorraine against that of Châtillon, else so sanguinary and inexplicable. Such expressions as the following, which the admiral indiscreetly addressed to Catherine de Medici, were not calculated to confirm a belief in Coligny's innocence; nor yet to diminish the thirst for vengeance felt by the relatives of the duke de Guise: "Think not, madame," wrote the admiral,[1] "that the words which I utter in self-defence, are said out of regret for the death of M. de Guise; for I esteem that event as one which cannot be surpassed by fortune for the good of the kingdom, and the Church of God, *and most especially is it beneficial for myself, and for all my house.*"

The Protestant party of France, despite the admiral's admissions, warmly asserted his innocence of participation in the crime; and to lessen the odium attaching to the event, de Bèze, and other ministers as unscrupulous, overwhelmed the memory of the deceased duke with undeserved opprobrium. Even Jeanne d'Albret herself seems to have connived at these slanderous imputations; and the only incident which reflects upon

[1] Lettre envoyée à la royne par le seigneur admiral, datée de Caen, 12ème de Mars, 1562. Bèze, Hist. des Eglises Réformées de France. Mém. de Condé, t. IV., p. 304.

her truth and candour, occurred at this juncture, when the ebullition of party-spirit defied wholesome restraint.

If the anecdote in question were not given on such unimpeachable testimony as that of Rénée de France, duchesse of Ferrara, under her own hand, in a curious, inedited letter, which she addressed to Calvin, its insertion here, judging from the past character of queen Jeanne, would justly admit of hesitation, as a story apocryphal and untrue. The duchess states, that some short time after the decease of the duke de Guise, the queen of Navarre paid a visit to her castle of Montargis. The secretary of one monsieur d'Arzy was present, and tried to entertain the royal ladies with scandalous tales respecting the duke, whom he appeared to forget was the son-in-law of the duchesse Rénée. The duchess presently asked this loquacious visitor whether he could affirm that all he stated was the truth. He made an evasive answer; but upon being closely questioned by the duchess, he acknowledged that the greater part of what he had stated was fictitious; naming the person who had invented the slander, which he excused, by saying "that it was done to benefit religion." The duchess indignantly rebuked such a theory; but it is affirmed that the queen of Navarre interposed, saying, "that she believed such fictions were lawful in self-defence; and that falsehood might even be commendable and holy, when uttered to advance the cause of religion." "I could not help resisting such a doctrine," writes the duchess of Ferrara. with honest warmth; "so that I observed to them, that God was not the father of lies, but that the devil is.

God is the God of truth, and His word is potent enough to defend His own, without using the devil's armour, and that of his children. Nevertheless," adds the duchess, "the said queen of Navarre shows so much zeal, and is endowed with so admirable a judgment in most matters, that I desire to take pattern by her; for, as the late queen of Navarre, her mother, was the first princess of this realm who favoured the gospel, it may be that the queen, her daughter, may build up, and complete the work. She is, it appears to me, able to do so, as any princess or lady of my acquaintance. I bear towards her a mother's love; and admire the manifold graces which God has bestowed upon her."[1] It is difficult, despite its apparent truth, to believe the above anecdote to be genuine; seeing that every other act and word, on record, published or spoken by the queen, exhibits Jeanne's abhorrence of a doctrine of expediency, which she often expressly reprobates, and characterizes as one of the distinctive marks, proclaiming the fallacy of the faith, as taught by the Romish priesthood.

The proceedings of the queen of Navarre continued to be closely watched by the court of Spain. A minute record of the most trivial proceedings of Catherine and her sons, of Jeanne d'Albret, and of the princes of Vendôme and Châtillon, was furnished to Philip by his ambassadors. The recent widowhood of the queen of Navarre opened a fresh prospect for intrigue to the Spanish cabinet. To obtain possession of the fertile

[1] Lettre de madame Rénée de France, duchesse de Ferrare, à Calvin. Bibl. Roy., MSS. Dupuy, 85-86, fo. 120.—Inedited. Dated "de Montargis, ce XXI. Mars."

provinces of Béarn, Foix, and Armagnac, by alliance, conquest, or exchange, had been one of the favourite schemes of the emperor Charles V., from the period that the kingdom of Navarre became annexed to Spain, by the arms of his grandfather Ferdinand the Catholic. The conscience of the Spanish monarchs, nevertheless, smote them for their unjust spoliation of the rightful sovereigns of Navarre; and Philip II., with the assent of the emperor, had desired to legalize that important acquisition by his union with Jeanne d'Albret. But the complacent feelings with which Philip had once regarded the heiress of Albret, had been long exchanged for sentiments of bitter hate. To despoil the heretic princess, and to wrest from her the heritage of her ancestors by arms, or by treacherous intrigue, Philip now considered as a sacred and imperative duty. Any scruples which he might still retain on the subject, were removed by the express commands of the pope, who exhorted his catholic majesty to prevent the overthrow of the Roman Catholic religion in Béarn by every means in his power. The Spanish archives of Simancas, afford us some important revelations of the means adopted by Philip's envoys, to impose upon Jeanne, and to induce her, by the most fallacious artifice, to attempt nothing against the Romish religion, and the hierarchy of Béarn and Foix. The subtle fraud with which Antoine de Bourbon had been plied by Chantonnay and Ste. Croix, was now brought to bear with even keener point, on the mind of his consort. The past defeats which Philip's diplomatists had suffered at Jeanne's hands were forgotten in the

ardour with which they adopted their royal master's projects.

At the commencement of the year 1563, about the third month of Jeanne's widowhood, the king of Spain nominated as his ambassador to the court of Pau, Don Juan Martinez d'Escurra—an unexpected appointment, which Philip explained, by observing that the demise of Antoine de Bourbon having rendered queen Jeanne an independent sovereign, such a measure had become requisite. D'Escurra was accompanied by one Jansana, as secretary of legation; and both these individuals were placed in subordinate capacity to Chantonnay, the Spanish ambassador, at the court of France. It was with feelings of little complacency that queen Jeanne beheld this junta established in her capital; believing, however, that d'Escurra and his colleagues were placed there as spies upon her conduct, she determined to receive them with the honour due to their master's dignity; but, nevertheless, to accept with confidence the challenge to diplomatic combat offered by her persevering opponent, the Spanish king. In the subsequent intercourse which took place between Jeanne and the envoys of Spain, it is amusing to observe the queen's skilful diplomacy: during an interview, Jeanne would pretend to listen with deference to the opinions of d'Escurra, and adopt his inferences with a docility, which sometimes emulated even that once shown by king Antoine to the suggestions of Chantonnay. When the time for action arrived, the queen proceeded to the execution of the project under discussion, as she had pre-deter-

mined, often to the extreme confusion of her dishonest counsellors.

The alleged object of d'Escurra's mission to the court of Jeanne d'Albret, was to negotiate a marriage between the queen and don Carlos, son and heir of king Philip; or, if her majesty preferred—the suit of don John of Austria, brother of his Spanish majesty, was tendered for her acceptance. The insincerity of Philip's proposals, with respect to the prince of the Asturias, was at once palpable to queen Jeanne. The prince had not completed his eighteenth year; while his violent temper, and strange vagaries, caused it to be apprehended that the hereditary insanity of his house had claimed another victim. Don John of Austria, the illegitimate son of Charles V., was a bold and gallant prince, some two months younger than don Carlos, and who already displayed that spirit of martial enterprise which twenty-six years afterwards, covered the brave victor of Lepanto with glory. This notable scheme was kept profoundly secret, and confided alone to the queen; a reserve in which Jeanne coincided, as she could not help feeling that such preposterous proposals, on the part of the king of Spain, were degrading to her royal dignity. She, nevertheless, pretended to feel great satisfaction at the alliances proposed for her acceptance, and declared that, of the two cavaliers, her choice would lead her to prefer the suit of the prince of Spain. "Madame de Vendôme," wrote the secretary Jansana to d'Escurra, who was then absent in Paris, "shows herself to be excessively flattered by the hope of an alliance with so

excellent and lofty a prince."[1] Upon receiving this intimation, d'Escurra forwarded a despatch to Madrid. He addresses himself to Philip's secretary of state, Erasso. "On the 29th of March," writes he, "I informed your excellency that we were expecting an answer from the wife of Vendôme[2] upon the memorandum which we read to her, respecting religious affairs, and whether she will submit her opinions to the judgment of the forthcoming council. As to the matrimonial projects, I have heard that she is willing, if such is his majesty's desire; but that she desires to espouse his majesty's son, rather than his brother. I suspect that as she is not yet assured of this marriage, she will pledge herself to nothing. In affairs of religion, the secretaries Jansana and Colon do well their duty; they have recently certified to me, that the wife of Vendôme confers with no one but themselves on the matter of this negotiation."[3]

The plausible overtures of Philip and his agents, had no effect on the mind of the queen, except perhaps to hasten the measures, which, with the assent of the council of state, she had determined to adopt, relative to the suppression of the Romish Faith in Béarn. The sénéchal of Béarn, d'Audaux, was at this period, faith-

[1] Archives de Simancas, K. 1392., A.B. 16, No. 44. De Jansana a Juan Martinez d'Escurra, dated 2 April 1563.—Inedited.

[2] The Spanish envoys use the most disrespectful terms in speaking of Jeanne d'Albret. She is generally called by them "la muger de Vendoma," Madame de Vendoma, or la Principessa de Béarn.

[3] Archives de Simancas, K. 1392, No. 42 (73), dated, 10 Abril 1563. Ined.

ful to the interests of his royal mistress; the Spanish envoys, however, aware of d'Audaux's influence in the council, made overtures to him on the part of the king of Spain, and even offered to impart the secret of their negotiation. This step coming to the knowledge of the queen of Navarre, she wrote to d'Escurra, forbidding him to hold conferences with any of her subjects on the proposed alliance between herself and the prince of Spain; intimating, that in case her wishes on this point were disregarded, she should decline to discuss the project. During this interval the Spanish ambassador was congratulating himself on the success of his diplomatic wiles; which he flattered himself prevented the queen from attempting anything to the prejudice of the Romish Faith. The astonishment and confusion of d'Escurra were, therefore, boundless, when the queen, at the commencement of June 1563, assembled her council, and boldly published letters-patent interdicting the exercise of the Romish religion within the limits of Béarn; and authorizing the seizure of the temporalities of that church, and their union with the domains of her crown. The queen states her royal will in the preamble to the letters-patent, thus:

"We ordain, declare, and command by this our present edict, that we will that all our subjects of the said countries of whatever condition, and degree, do make public profession of the faith which we now publish under our seal, and authority, as being most surely grounded on the doctrine, and written word of the prophets and apostles; and that on one may plead ignorance in default of obedience, we have thought meet

to command that the said articles of faith should be incorporated, and inserted in these our said letters-patent."

The articles of the Calvinistic confession are then inserted, clothed in the vigorous phraseology none knew better how to wield, than Jeanne d'Albret—not even her famed contemporary, queen Elizabeth. The queen proceeds to regulate the future application of the temporalities which she had declared confiscated. She establishes a permanent ecclesiastical council of nine personages, to settle the affairs of religion, and to administer these revenues. She commands that all charters, title-deeds, and documents connected with benefices, or other sources of ecclesiastical emolument, shall be delivered into the hands of the said commissioners by a certain day, under pain of severe penalties, arbitrary fines, and imprisonment. "Forasmuch," continues queen Jeanne, in language rivalling even that of king Henry VIII., in his celebrated warrants, decreeing the dissolution of monasteries in England—"as it is expedient to elect competent persons to administer these temporalities, we ordain and command that all the lands hitherto appertaining to the said bishops, canons, abbés, deans, archdeacons, deacons, priors, curés, prebends, monks, and nuns, in virtue of nomination, or presentation from patrons, lay or ecclesiastical, and which they enjoyed in virtue of their several titles, and institution, by the provision of their ordinaries, or of the pope, and which they possessed under the title of benefices, or commanderies, or hospitals for lepers, or hospitals for the sick generally, or brotherhoods, or chapelries, shall, from

the present time and henceforth, be placed under the control, government, and administration of the said council." Then follows a paragraph, by which the queen makes over to her commissioners these church lands; all of which were placed at her disposal: and she confirms the lay peers of Béarn in any impropriation of tithes in fee, granted to them, or to their ancestors, within the memory of man.[1]

This celebrated edict, abolishing the Roman Catholic worship throughout Béarn, was issued by queen Jeanne, from her castle at Pau; it is countersigned by the sénéchal of Béarn, Claude de Levis, baron d'Audaux, president of the queen's privy council. An act of more dauntless independence, than the issue of these letters-patent, has never been perpetrated by any sovereign whatever. At this juncture, queen Jeanne's little territory was beleaguered by hostile armies. Montluc, animated with religious fury, almost insensate in its manifestations, waited but the permission of his government to carry fire and sword throughout the length and breadth of Béarn. Philip of Spain, hungered to unite the fragment of heritage which still remained to the grand-daughter of the heroic Catherine de Foix, with the four-and-twenty realms which already bowed beneath his sovereignty. Pius IV. menaced the queen with interdict and ex-communication; while her young son remained a hostage at the court of Catherine de Medici. The daring of the queen in this matter, it

[1] Lettres patentes de la royne Jehanne sur le Conseil Ecclésiastique touchant l'union au domaine des biens Ecclésiastiques Catholiques. MS. Bibl. Royale, F. Dupuy, No, 152-153.—Inedited.

must be owned, amounted almost to rashness; and the dissensions of the government of France alone saved her from irretrievable ruin. Moreover, this arbitrary confiscation of the temporalities of the church of Rome within the limits of her principality, partook too much of the nature of a persecution to be attended with satisfactory results, political or moral.

The queen speedily followed the issue of these letters-patent, by the publication of a second edict, regulating the disposal of the funds so acquired. A large grant was made by queen Jeanne for the foundation of a college of theology at Orthez. She founded, also, secondary collegiate institutions in various parts of Béarn for the education of her youthful subjects. No part of the ecclesiastical forfeitures did the queen appropriate for her own private expenditure, or to the temporal service of the state; nor yet did she bestow a single acre in donation upon private individuals. She ordained that all churches, having insufficient congregations, should be delivered over to her protestant subjects. In those places where the two religions were equally balanced, she decreed that the church should be the common property of both denominations of worshippers. This last *ordonnance* extended to all her subjects and vassals of Béarn, Foix, and Lower Navarre, indiscriminately. Jeanne proceeded steadily in her work of reform; she listened to no protests; she coldly disregarded the menaces of France and Spain, and day after day she issued fresh mandates with inexorable pertinacity, completing and regulating her design.

Amongst the members of her council, Jeanne occasionally met with steady opposition. D'Audaux, though he still adhered to the policy of the queen of Navarre, and countersigned the decree suppressing the exercise of the Romish faith, wavered somewhat in his co-operation, owing to the intrigues of the Spanish envoys. Antoine de Pardaillon, sénéchal of Albret, one day warmly represented to the queen that she grievously transgressed the laws of God and of the king, by so oppressing her Roman Catholic subjects. Jeanne replied, that, on the contrary, she was proving herself a zealous servant of God; "and as for the king of France, monseigneur, what then? Am I not an anointed queen, and a sovereign, likewise?" "Dare you venture upon such a comparison, madame?" bluffly retorted the sénéchal, "I could clear the frontier of your majesty's realms with a bound." Jeanne fixed her eyes steadily on her insolent censor. "'Tis well, monseigneur," replied she, "you will, therefore, do well to quit my realm without delay."

The next act of the queen, was to sign a privy council warrant, authorizing the removal of images, relics, and shrines, from the churches in Béarn. The vessels used heretofore at the celebration of the mass were confiscated; nevertheless, the queen refused to permit the gold and silver plate to be melted, or otherwise appropriated; but she confided the whole under sequestration to the care of one of her recently appointed ecclesiastical commissioners. To invest her act with more solemnity and weight, queen Jeanne was present

when the images were taken from the cathedral church of Lescar. She afterwards caused the high altar to be removed; and, attended by a numerous train of courtiers, she was present at the first Protestant service performed in the cathedral, and celebrated after the work of demolition was pronounced complete. "On the second day of this month, I went to Lescar," wrote the ambassador d'Escurra, to Philip's secretary of state, Erasso; "and there I saw the church despoiled of the holy images, the Host, and the crucifix; also, of a silver statue of Our Lady, and of the child Jesus, with the pixes, wherein the said holy sacrament reposed, all which, with the remaining treasure of silver plate, madame de Vendôme carried away with her to Pau, on the 17th of June last. The following day, being the 18th of the said month, she sent people of her accursed sect, to break all the images, crucifixes, and altar-pieces within the said church; moreover, they overthrew the altars, and burned the holy wafers appertaining thereunto; carrying away with them other vessels; no inhabitant of the said town of Lescar daring to molest them, under pain of death, or confiscation of goods."[1] At other places, however, the people, incited by their priests, rose to resist the queen's mandate for the spoliation of their churches. At a small place, a league from Pau, Jeanne's commissioner was severely handled by the women of the district, who seized the unfortunate minister while he was in the act of burning their images; they tore off his hair and beard, and dragged

[1] Archives de Simancas, 1392, No. 42, 148 (66). D'Escurra a Don Juan Erasso, dated 14 Agosto, 463—Ined.

him from the church, to strangle him, had he not fortunately been rescued by a party of Huguenots, who, hearing his cries, hastened to his assistance. A fight ensued between the Protestant and Roman Catholic inhabitants of the place, during which the minister received several wounds from a dagger. At length, he made his escape to Pau, and waited on the queen, to inform her of the outrage to which he had been subjected. Jeanne instantly despatched personages to investigate the affair, and arrest the guilty parties; but when her commissioners arrived, they were so roughly assailed by the excited populace, that they were forced to flee for their lives.[1]

At the little town of Morlas, six miles from Pau, the same tumultuous scenes occurred; but Jeanne, nothing daunted, executed her designs with calm determination, causing the treasures from all the churches to be conveyed to the subterraneous chambers of the mint, situated beneath her castle of Pau; and presiding most days, personally, at the ecclesiastical council, which she had instituted for the sequestration and future disposal of the revenues and benefices of the priesthood. So little had her purpose been divined by the astute Spanish minister, who still remained absent in Paris, that on the next day, (June 18th, 1563,) to that upon which queen Jeanne seized the treasures at Lescar, we find him writing thus to Madrid:—"The secretary, Jansaña, certifies to me that the wife of Vendôme (*la muger de Vendoma*) greatly desires the completion of the marriage between herself and the prince of Spain; but not

[1] Archives de Simancas, K. 1392, No. 42.—Ined.

the alliance proposed between herself and the uncle of the said prince. Jansana asks whether I have informed your excellency of this, to which I replied in the affirmative. He further stated, that if this project (which is most desirable) be persisted in, so that she can rely on the performance of the articles proposed, in the letter sent to her, the wife of Vendôme will remain faithful to the Catholic Apostolic church; and that all will end prosperously, especially if the hand of the prince be tendered for her acceptance." To which I replied, "that I knew not why the term prosperously was used in the matter; but that no matrimonial negotiation would be entered into, whatever, unless the said wife of Vendôme reconciled herself to the Romish church. In her own territories, the wife of Vendôme undertakes nothing adverse to our religion; to all her subjects she permits liberty of conscience, a fact in which I am well informed, and which I impart to your excellency because I know that it is the truth, should you have heard to the contrary."[1] Philip's secretary Erasso replies to this despatch in very gloomy strains; he informs the envoy that he had submitted his letter, and that of Jansana, to his catholic majesty, but that the king had not been pleased to ordain anything fresh concerning the proposed union between the prince of Spain and madame de Vendôme, "inasmuch as the latter offers no substantial pledges, but persists in treating only upon matters in general." Upon the progress of the reformed faith throughout France, the Spanish secretary proceeds to descant thus: "It appears

[1] Archives de Simancas, K. 1392, A. B. 16, No. 42 (76).—Ined.

to me that each day our faith falls into greater disrepute; our churches are demolished, and many other things are perpetrated, most unworthy, and prejudiciable to the service of God our master. These things are much felt here, and your excellency may believe that his majesty, being eminently a most catholic prince, and so near a neighbour to the realm of France, will never cease until he descries a remedy for these evils; which remedy would be best found in the alliance of madame de Vendôme, should such be possible, as it would satisfy both herself and her party, and would afford ground for further negotiation."[1]

A rumour of the probable intentions of the queen of Navarre had, meantime, reached the French court. Catherine, therefore, sent directions to Montluc, rigorously to suppress the exercise of the Reformed Faith within his government, which comprehended the military supervision of the territories Jeanne held in feudal tenure under the French crown. Montluc was, likewise, desired by Catherine to make his peace with the queen of Navarre, and to apologize for certain violent expressions which he had used, and respecting which, Jeanne complained. The marshal, it appears, had publicly alluded to a reported descent of the English on the coast of Guyenne; adding, "that it was not to be believed but that they were encouraged and summoned to the enterprise by some personage of exalted rank, and which could only be the queen of Navarre; but, if it even were the said queen, or any other individual, he would cause them to expiate such treason with their

[1] Ibid, No. 43, (123.)—Ined.

life." This allusion gave great offence to queen Jeanne, and she appealed to Catherine for redress. As the French court, at this period, was likewise indulging in the hope of cajoling the queen into a betrayal of the interests of the Huguenot party, Montluc received a command from his sovereign to write to the queen of Navarre, and offer the best explanation in his power, relative to the offensive allusion. As words cost Montluc little, he unhesitatingly obeyed Catherine's directions: "I supplicate you in all humility, madame," wrote he to Jeanne d'Albret,[1] "not to hold me inexcusable, if in my extreme consternation, holding the office that I do over these countries, I did use those words. I hold them now in great displeasure; and if it pleases you that I humbly crave your pardon for such, I am quite prepared to do so, and ask it earnestly. If you will condescend, madame, to confer so great a benefit upon me as to forget my offence, in pledge of the contentment and delight which your gracious pardon will confer, I offer to you my life-long service, my fortune, and my sons, to render you very devoted service against all your foes; excepting only my prior duty to their majesties, the king and the queen, and their highnesses, the princes." Montluc, when he thus wrote in terms, which, for a man of his haughty and unscrupulous bearing the queen of Navarre might well deem ironical, had not heard of Jeanne's edict, confiscating the temporalities of the Romish clergy. Catherine also wrote to Jeanne, mentioning the rumour

[1] Archives de Simancas, K. 1392, No. 44, (156), translado de una carta scripta de 12 Julio (1563) a madama de Vandoma de la parte del Señor de Montluc.—Ined.

that had moved the indignation of the French court, exhorting her to caution and forbearance. This interference, which Jeanne ascribed to the gossip of Jansana, addressed to his chief Escurra in Paris, greatly offended the queen of Navarre. It appears that Jeanne took no further notice of the unwelcome admonition than to intimate to the secretary, Jansana, how ill she received the officiousness of those who busied themselves in recording her actions, to satiate the animosities of her enemies of the French and Spanish courts. "On Sunday last, madame de Vendôme sent me word by my nephew, that the qeeen-mother had also written to her to say that it was rumoured she (madame de Vendôme) intended to compel her subjects to profess the same religious opinions as herself—a report, which the said wife of Vendôme declared that she deemed both strange and extraordinary,"[1] adds Jansana; who throughout his despatches evinces a keen sense of Jeanne's knowledge of his faculty of misrepresentation and slander.

The queen of Navarre, regardless of the subtle manœuvring of her enemies, was now actively negotiating to obtain suitable ministers to officiate in the churches, which she had so unceremoniously provided for her Protestant subjects. She wrote to Geneva to request that the elders of the Calvinistic church would send her a noted minister, named Merlin, and twenty other sound preachers to administer the word of God to her Béarnois people;[2] but especially to the inhabitants

[1] Archives de Simancas, 1392, No. 126.—Ined.
[2] Olhagaray, Hist. de Foix, Béarn, et Navarre.

of Foix and Lower Navarre, her loving vassals, who still remained steadfast in their fidelity, to what queen Jeanne designates as the "Romish idolatry."

The unfavourable report which Jansana gave of the queen's proceedings, and especially of the stripping of the churches in Béarn, and of the suspension of the Romish ecclesiastics, caused the ambassador d'Escurra to quit Paris, and to hasten with all speed to Pau, in the hope of prevailing upon the queen of Navarre to recal some of her proceedings, and upon a more positive promise of alliance with Don Carlos, to reconcile herself with the Holy See. D'Escurra on his arrival, found that the queen had quitted Pau, to sojourn for a few days in the episcopal palace at Lescar. Thither he, therefore, proceeded, observant, for once during his ambassage, of the queen's prohibition against his holding conference with d'Audaux, or any member of his council. He sent to notify his arrival to the queen, and to request audience. Jeanne, aware of the menaces, and of the probable insolence of the expostulation she was likely to receive from Philip's envoy, replied that d'Escurra might speak with her, if he pleased, on the following day at three in the afternoon, in the garden attached to the episcopal palace of Lescar. The envoy punctually made his appearance at the period indicated; he found the queen walking in the garden attended by her ladies. At a sign from Jeanne, they retired to some distance, so as not be able to hear the discourse of the ambassador. D'Escurra approached, and with an obeisance, presented to the queen a letter from king Philip, to deliver which was the ostensible

purport of the audience he had demanded. Before Jeanne opened the letter he exclaimed, "Madame, if I had thought to have seen all that I have beheld in this town, and in the church of Lescar, I should not have waited upon your majesty in this place; never before has there been committed by any Christian prince so enormous a sacrilege as has been perpetrated here. Omnipotent God! hast thou indeed patience to suffer that the Holy Sacrament of thy body should be impiously consumed by fire, with the images of thy Blessed Mother!"

The rhapsody of the envoy was arrested by the queen, who quietly said, "What have the princes, to whom you allude, to do with my actions here in Pau? They do what pleases them in their own dominions. I have acted in accordance with the commands of God, as I read in His Holy Gospel." "Madame de Vendôme," says d'Escurra, "looked fixedly in my face, being paler than usual, when she thus spoke, and somewhat agitated. I replied to this last speech," continues he, "by observing, that what she thus deemed to be truth, was error; and that, in thinking to do well, she had committed great wrong." To this speech, the queen made no reply; but opened the letter sent to her by Philip, and read it attentively. "Madame," persevered the officious envoy, "when his Catholic majesty addressed that letter to you, he might have devined that which you recently have performed, because, at the very hour when his majesty wrote it, which was on the 17th of June, you began the demolition of the church of Lescar." "Monseigneur," rejoined queen Jeanne, "I feel indebted to his Catholic majesty, for the interest

which he deigns to show me, for which I remain his humble servant. I would fain demonstrate, by my actions, the good will which I bear him, on the several points discussed in this letter. In that which concerns the religion in which I have been born, and educated, and professing the which, my father, my mother, and my husband, died; God gave me the dominion of these countries at a very youthful age, that I might rule by the guidance of His Gospel, and cause those holy precepts to be taught everywhere. If, for this act of duty, his Catholic majesty chooses to declare war against me and my people, I commend my cause to God, who is over all, and above all. If it is the intention of the Catholic king to take advantage to do me harm, as his majesty insinuates, of the contiguity of our vassals and territories, why does he not perform the same threats as respects the queen of England, who has executed the very same things which I have done in her kingdom?" "Madame," replied the astute Spaniard, "two men kill a third; but from the one, justice asks nothing; but from the other, she takes and exacts retribution. Finally, however, justice pounces equally upon both." "Monseigneur," interposed the queen, "for these many years past, I have been harassed by similar negotiations on the part of his Catholic majesty; your king places confidence in you; I will now reciprocate the trust, as far as you are concerned, by asking what, in your opinion, would be the remedy to obviate all the things that I have lately done?" For an instant, the wily diplomatist paused, before he gave his answer; feeling conscious that the queen intended to probe the extent

of concession expected from her by the Spanish court. "Madame," replied d'Escurra, "I know of no remedy excepting one, which is, that you command the arrest of all heretic ministers, and others who have counselled you to commit this heinous crime; and, at the same time, assemble your nobles, gentry, and the principal citizens of your dominions. When this is done, you should, in presence of them all, demand pardon of Almighty God; next, you must condemn those, your late evil counsellors and abettors, to the flames; and, afterwards, command a solemn procession, and, with your own hand, replace the holy images in the churches from whence, by your orders, they have been torn. You ought, then, to despatch a solemn embassy, to ask pardon and absolution from the pope. By so acting, madame, you will mitigate the great anger felt against you by the Catholic princes of Europe." Great must have been the self-command of the high-spirited Jeanne, when she heard herself so insolently taken to task by Philip's envoy. She replied, that nothing should induce her to adopt his counsel: that, before she had undertaken such important matters, she had consulted with her parliament, and with many learned and wise personages; and that, having perpetrated so notable a thing, to revoke, or to modify it in any way, would be holding forth an example very pernicious in its consequences. Jeanne then abruptly dismissed the ambassador, saying, "that another time, she would discourse with him on these matters."[1]

During the time that the Spanish embassy remained

[1] Archives de Simancas, K. 1395, No. 42, 148, fol. 2.—Ined.

in Béarn, a period of one year, Jansana and his agents, were directed by Philip's cabinet to transmit statements respecting Jeanne's fortified places, the distances between the principal towns of Béarn and Navarre, the condition of the roads, and the complement of the queen's garrisons. After d'Escurra returned from Paris, Jansana seems to have employed especial diligence in pursuing these enquiries, whilst his chief was occupied in quarrelling with the queen. The queen quitted Lescar a few days after her interview with Escurra, and proceeded to another place, which is nameless, about six miles from Pau, probably, however, the little town of Nai. While here, Jeanne tried to compose some of the differences in her cabinet, by reconciling the baron de Luxe, one of the most potent and wealthy peers of Béarn, with the seigneur de Mazaux; her efforts, however, so deeply offended the sénéchal d'Audaux, who was the personal enemy of de Luxe, that he took leave of the queen, and departed with his consort and her children to his castle in Perigord, vowing never more to return to Pau. The queen, who attributed the disaffection of d'Audaux to the wily overtures of the Spanish envoy, manifested how deeply she was displeased by their proceedings.[1]

D'Escurra, during this interval, still importunately demanded audience; Jeanne at length sent for him one afternoon, while she took her after dinner promenade in the great hall of her castle of Pau. The audience lasted for five hours, the ambassador trying to read the queen's intentions; while Jeanne essayed by the subtilty

[1] Archives de Simancas, R. 1392. No. 126.—L. ed.

of her questions to penetrate the tortuous politics of Philip II. She opened the parley by putting the singular question to the ambassador, whether, "being of the religion she was, she could marry a husband professing the Romish Faith?" "I perceive," continued the queen, "that all the discourse which has been held to me concerning my marriage with Don Juan of Austria, or with the prince of Spain, tends to the same fashion and effect, as the fine negotiations which were held with my deceased husband relative to the kingdom of Sardinia. Since the death of my said husband, monseigneur, a letter has fallen into my hands, written by the pope's legate,[1] in which his eminence stated to to his holiness, that it might be convenient for the fortune of the war to inspire me, if possible, with the same delusive hopes relative to the realm of Sardinia—" The queen's remarks being exceedingly unpalatable to the envoy, he hastened to break the thread of her discourse by observing, "It is true, madame, that neither the prince of Spain, nor yet Don Juan of Austria will consent to espouse a consort professing a religion contrary to his own belief, even were she queen and mistress of the world itself. As to what you say, that you see not proof sufficient on our part to lead you to believe in the sincerity of this proposed alliance, we also affirm that we perceive nothing on your side to encourage us to propose more, as you confer on things generally, and on nothing in particular."

"You know, monseigneur, that I am now thirty-four

[1] The cardinal d'Armagnac, or Prospero de Santa Croce, cardinal bishop of Chisamo.

years old; besides, no princess enters into second nuptial engagements before she has completed her year of widowhood. When that is accomplished, I may have changed my mind respecting this alliance; even if the king of Spain is pleased to maintain his friendship for me during so long a period." D'Escurra replied: "If you, madame, were sensible of the offence which you have committed in the sight of God, I should have great hope of the fortunate issue of this negotiation; but as you experience no remorse, I cannot anticipate a happy result." Jeanne's patience, at this renewed objugation on the part of the envoy, failed her: she turned towards d'Escurra, and with eyes flashing with anger, exclaimed: "What you term Sacrament, monseigneur, is an idolatrous fraud, which has caused the everlasting perdition of countless souls! I saw the wafer belonging to the church of Lescar, which was made only of flour and water, kneaded together with a crucifix, it being old, and green as the colour of grass! And you assert that God is incarnate there!" "That Sacrament, madame," rejoined Escurra, "was the true body of God; and, for such, it is adored and reverenced by all orthodox Catholics. But, as you hold it in such little esteem, I may no longer converse with you." The envoy proceeded to state, that having satisfied himself of the truth that the queen had committed the horrible profanity of burning the Host, he requested dismissal from her presence. The lion spirit in the bosom of Jeanne d'Albret, was now thoroughly roused, both against the subtle envoy and his unscrupulous master. The bitterness of her contempt for their artifices, so long repressed, fell now in words of

telling power. "I should have been content in knowing what were your true instructions, monseigneur, respecting this negotiation. Although the Catholic king is a great prince, I also have the power of serving you. I leave all to your discretion; you perceive my intentions at the present time, and for the future. My conscience dictates this course; and, even if I knew that therefore the king of Spain, or any other potentate, would take my head, and before my death, slay my children under my eyes, I would suffer all, sooner than believe any other creed than that which I now profess. I desire the favour and friendship of the Catholic king, more than that of any other prince; nevertheless, I am not so forlorn and defenceless, but that I command the allegiance of 1500 gentlemen of valour, all professing the Reformed Faith; besides which, I have 30,000 soldiers, who would die to accomplish my will; and all the warriors who fought in France, during the last civil war, have placed their swords at my disposal!" D'Escurra made no reply, except to request Jeanne to favour him with a written statement of her response to his Spanish majesty. Jeanne replied, that she would send her reply in cypher to the ambassador; she then terminated the audience, by summoning back her ladies, and discoursing with them in a pleasant and merry tone.[1]

D'Escurra consoled himself for the little influence which his words had produced by writing a despatch for Spain, in which he urged his royal master to undertake an expedition to punish the heresy of the queen

[1] Archives de Simancas, K. 1392, No. 143.—Ined.

of Navarre. He said that the queen was badly served by her vassals, so that if any Catholic prince would confirm them in their privileges as Roman Catholics, they would rise against her authority, including Jeanne's Basque subjects; for the entire Lutheran population of Béarn, according to the ambassador, amounted to less than one thousand persons. D'Escurra concludes his despatch by a pitiable statement of the way in which queen Jeanne had foiled his designs.

"For two years have I been occupied with this negotiation, hoping one day to reap fruit for my pains," writes d'Escurra, "but now I witness its termination without result whatever. I have lost my time and my money in making journeys hither and thither, besides, also, sending my son to this court, as your excellency may recollect." The despatch ends by a supplication on the part of the envoy, that Philip would reimburse him for the sums thus lavished in his service."[1].

The queen of Navarre allowed some days to elapse before she sent the response to Philip's letter, so imperiously demanded by d'Escurra. Being well aware that her strength lay in the support of France, and not wishing to offend queen Catherine, who had already testified surprise at the *empressements* of the Spanish envoys in Béarn, Jeanne despatched her secretary, le Royer, to St. Germain, to communicate with the queen-mother, and to submit, for the approval of the council, the answer which she intended to make to Philip's propositions. D'Escurra, offended at the

[1] Archives de Simancas, A. 1392, No. 148.—Ined.

reception which he had received from Jeanne, quitted Pau, and proceeded to Paris, leaving Jansana to conduct affairs. To him, therefore, the queen communicated her reply, which was to this effect, "that the queen greatly prized and desired the friendship and countenance of king Philip. Nevertheless, all that she had done in the matter of religion she firmly maintained and ratified, and that she would sooner die than act differently. Finally, she reminded king Philip that amongst princes, it was the rule not to interfere in the internal government of each other's territories; and she, therefore, prayed his Catholic majesty to remember this fact, and to refrain from interfering, or from promoting disaffection in the countries over which she ruled as sovereign princess."[1]

Jansana despatched this reply to Escurra, in Paris, and from thence the latter sent it to Madrid, adding a letter of his own, in which he informs the secretary of state, Erasso, that the answer of madame de Vendôme had been read and approved by the French court; and that there was no chance of her submission, as she obstinately adhered to the errors of her sect. "I beseech your excellency to inform me, whether, under these circumstances, it is becoming to treat more with her. I greatly fear, that she will induce her people to become as she is herself; but, as I know not the ultimate designs of his majesty, although I feel persuaded that they are good and holy, I cannot decide whether it will be better to dissimulate the remedy we propose, on the supposition

[1] Archives de Simancas, A.B. 16, No. 65. De Juan Martinez d'Escurra, a Erasso, secretario de estado.—Ined.

that, some day, we may agree with her. But, if what I am about to suggest, will not mar other negotiation, it appears to me that now is our opportunity to strike a blow at smaller cost, and by fewer troops, inasmuch as her vassals and nobles are indignant and disaffected.[1] In due course, Escurra received a reply from Madrid. His instructions directed him still to dissimulate; and to express again to the queen of Navarre, the horror which his majesty, in common with other Catholic princes, felt at her conduct. The ambassador was also instructed to request Jeanne, in his master's name, to be satisfied with the destruction which she had wrought at Lescar and Morlas; and not to attempt other sequestrations of treasure.[2] Queen Jeanne, always watchful of the proceedings of the Spanish envoys, knowing that they were constantly occupied in subtle plots for the overthrow of her authority, addressed, about this period, a little note, in Spanish, to Jansana one Saturday evening, evidently to intimate that she was cognizant of his intrigues, and prepared to circumvent them.

QUEEN JEANNE, TO THE SECRETARY JANSANA.

JANSANA,

I request that you will continue to send notice to myself of all things concerning my government, with which you have to do. I have received news from the court of France,

[1] Archives de Simancas, A.B. No. 65. De Juan Martinez d'Escurra, a Erasso, secretario de estado.—Ined.

[2] Ibid, K. 1392, 126. De Don —— a Don Juan Escurra. The following words are appended in a marginal note to the original despatch in the hand-writing of Philip II., "Estotambien que no podia ser, no son a mi pareçer."—Ined.

where my religion prospers. The queen has especially done me the honour to write to me, that she has heard a rumour that the Spanish king (el Español) intends to invade my dominions, but she assures me that neither the king nor herself will suffer such an outrage. Besides which, nearly the whole of my friends, relatives, and allies, design to come to my assistance. You will, therefore, take an early opportunity of informing me of all that you have to communicate respecting this design. I pray God to grant you your desires.

Vuestra buena mestresa,[1]

JUANA.

This letter of Jeanne's was also forwarded to Madrid: in fact, so alert were Philip's agents in reporting her designs, words, and actions, that, besides the usual couriers passing between Madrid and Paris, Escurra maintained an army of spies and agents, whom he despatched on his missions over the Pyrenees, under all kinds of disguises.

Religious matters were, at this period, progressing to the desire of the queen's heart, in her territories. The new ministers, and Merlin had been welcomed with enthusiasm: and the ecclesiastical commissioners carried out the work entrusted to them, with ability and success. The papal court, however, had not been unobservant of Jeanne's proceedings. Inflamed by the insidious representations of Philip II., the wrath of pope Pius, which had been drifting hither and thither, throughout civilized

[1] Archives de Simancas. No. 05, K. 1392.—Ined. Del Secretario Jansana a d'Escurra. "Mi señor," says the secretary, "sabado a la noche, digo el passado, madama de Vandoma me scrivio una carta, que es del tenor seguiente."

Europe, now concentrated itself upon Béarn. The support afforded to the queen of Navarre by Catherine de Medici, offered a serious obstacle to the designs of Jeanne's enemies in the conclave; but they relied on the alleged disaffection of her subjects, and on the wily diplomacy of Philip of Spain.

The cardinal d'Armagnac, at length, returned from Trent, and resumed his legatine, and inquisitorial functions over Béarn, and the south of France. Notwithstanding the able apology for her proceedings, pronounced in full consistory by the cardinal Muret, Jeanne's name had not been removed from the lists of the Holy Office in Rome: and Pius IV. never heard her mentioned in his presence without manifesting angry emotion. The first indication of the coming storm fell on the devoted head of Louis d'Albret, bishop of Lescar,[1] who, it must be owned, merited censure for suffering, even at the command of his sovereign, that the sacred vessels, and the images, should be removed from his cathedral, while he styled himself an obedient son of the holy Roman church. The cardinal, in his legatine capacity, therefore, addressed a sharp reprimand to the bishop: "Monsieur," wrote he, "I have been long without believing what occurred lately in your church of Lescar, because it could not enter into my imagination that you would concert the ruin of the said church, nor yet so unworthily abandon the flock over which you are appointed, to side with the enemies

[1] The bishops of Lescar were appointed directly by the Holy See. They held most important rank in the principality; the bishop of Lescar being always president of the states of Béarn.

of God and of Christendom. I am, however, constrained to believe, and to hold for truth, that in your presence, and by your consent, the images in your said church of Lescar have been taken from the altars, the crucifixes, and the baptismal fonts broken, the ornaments, and reliquaries sequestrated, and your priests and canons suspended, and forbidden to serve God according to the ritual of our Catholic church; and all this you have permitted, in order to introduce heresy, and sanction the preaching of abominable errors; the which, the devil has sown, in our days, by the instrumentality of his ministers. Monsieur, can it be possible that you have so far forgotten the duties of your priestly calling, the salvation of your soul, the repose of your conscience, the faith that you have vowed to God, and the obligations that you have contracted in the sight of men? A prelate so advanced in years as yourself, who has so solemnly sworn obedience to the Vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ, and engaged to feed his sheep, to cherish them, and to keep them within the fold, can he forget himself so immeasureably as to commit so notable a perjury, and abandon his poor flock, to become a prey of famishing wolves. Monsieur, monsieur, I fear me that the scandal and the crime are so infinite, that retribution will fall upon him who has committed them!" In this strain, the cardinal rates the bishop through a very long epistle: and finally he signs himself, "*votre ancien frère, cousin, et meilleur ami, quand vous serez reconcilié à Dieu, et à son église.*"[1]

[1] Lettre du cardinal d'Armagnac à l'évêque de Lescar. Mém. de Condé. t. IV., p. 628. The cardinal, amongst other charges, accuses the

The poor old bishop, alarmed by this threatening exordium, could choose no better course than to lay the letter before his good mistress and her privy council. The council had scarcely perused the missive than Jeanne herself received an admonition from the irate legate. The letter was couched in more moderate language; but its insolent insinuations greatly incensed the queen.

"Madame," said this indefatigable prelate, "I cannot deny that I have felt great and just regret on learning what has recently happened in your town of Lescar, when the images in the church were felled, the fonts and altars destroyed, the jewels, ornaments, and silver plate seized by your people, and the canons and priests interdicted from celebrating their accustomed service. All this is the more to be deplored, madame, as I understand that the said outrage was committed in your presence, and by your commandment. Reflect, madame, on the consequences of this enterprise, which can only entail great disasters, and which has been concocted by the evil counsellors you retain round your person, whom under pretext of religion would place you in such a position, that unless God himself interposes, you could not extricate yourself. Madame, although you are minded through their evil council to plant a new religion in your countries of Béarn and Lower Navarre, the design will not succeed. Your subjects will never

bishop of having publicly espoused a young wife. The cardinal's zeal often transports him beyond the boundary of fact; and in this instance, no evidence exists to prove that the aged prelate had brought so great a scandal on the church in which he ministered.

consent; they have already plainly intimated to you, during the session of the states-general, that they will never abandon the faith in which they have been nurtured. Assure yourself, madame, that you have to deal with a people, constant, and devoted to the traditions, and customs of their country; and that were you to touch even the smallest of their seignorial rights, you would find a jealous resistance of the design; how much greater, therefore, will be their opposition, when you attempt to force their consciences, and to deprive them of the religion of their ancestors."

The cardinal next menaces the queen with the discountenance of her potent neighbours, the kings of France and Spain. "Moroever, madame," continues he, "I pray you to reflect, that your states are encircled by the dominions of two of the most potent kings of Europe, who abhor nothing more than the religion which you favour, and into whose countries your subjects will retire. Should they not do this, the king of Spain will not, as you know, endure such neighbours; but his Catholic majesty will gladly avail himself of this unhappy pretext to invade your dominions. I do not know, madame, what our own king will say to the matter; and whether he will not himself seize your territories rather than suffer another to possess himself of them. Assure yourself, therefore, madame, that it is impossible for you to plant peacefully, and to maintain permanently a new religion, in your small territories, surrounded as you are by such potent kings, you not having for a rampart and defence the great ocean as has the realm of England. I know full well, madame,

that you will say to me that you prefer to forfeit kingdom, duchy, and principality, and to content yourself with a revenue of five hundred livres, rather than relinquish your enterprise, which is founded, as you imagine, on the Gospel; but, madame, messieurs, your children, have deserved better from you, than that you should deprive them of such fine heritages, which the kings of holy memory, your royal ancestors, have so carefully preserved for them; having first placed the crown of a kingdom, and of so many duchies and principalities upon your head, that you might transmit it unimpaired to monseigneur le prince, your son."[1]

Queen Jeanne, like her mother, wielded the pen of a ready writer. So transported with indignation did she feel, at the audacious remonstrances addressed to her, that she commanded the courier who had brought the legate's letter, to wait, and carry back at once her response. She then retired into her cabinet, and penned the following spirited reply. The letter, notwithstanding its great length, is given almost entire; as no other document exists which presents so vivid a picture of the passionate energy of mind and deed which distinguished this right noble princess.

QUEEN JEANNE, TO THE CARDINAL D'ARMAGNAC.

Mon Cousin,

Having knowledge from my earliest years of the manner in which you devoted yourself to render service to the

[1] Lettre du cardinal d'Armagnac à la royne de Navarre, datée de Belleperche le 10ème d'Aoust, 1563. Olhagaray, Hist. de Foix, Béarn et Navarre. Mém. de Condé, t. iv., p. 594.

deceased king and queen, my father and mother, your present strange delusions shall not prevent me from acknowledging and lauding such fidelity; nor also, from owning that you have, until lately, continued such towards her who has inherited their worldly substance. I could, nevertheless, have desired that this good and faithful friendship on your part, should not have been lessened, or rather crossed by that which I scarcely know, whether to term religion or superstition: nevertheless, I thank you for the warnings which you have given me, taking them as I do with reservation, as inconsistent, like the mingling of Heaven with the clay of earth. As to the first point upon which you comment—the reformation in religion which I have commenced at Pau, and at Lescar—I am very earnestly resolved, by the grace of God, to continue such reformation throughout my sovereignty of Béarn. I have learned to do so from my Bible, (which I read more than the works of your doctors,) in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, from whence I take king Joash for my pattern, in order that I may not be reproached, as were some of the kings of Israel, that, professing myself a servant of God, I yet destroyed not the high places consecrated to idols. As for the ruin which you state that my evil counsellors prepare for me, I am not yet so forsaken by God and my friends, as not to have still some worthy persons near me—persons, who not only wear the semblance of religion, but practice its precepts: for, such as the head is, so are the members. Neither have I undertaken, as you assert, to plant a new religion, but only to build up again the ruins of our ancient faith, in which design I feel certain of a fortunate issue.

I clearly perceive, mon cousin, that you have been deceived, both in the matter of the answer of the States, and also upon the condition of my subjects generally. The said states have tendered me obedience in religious matters.

My subjects, ecclesiastical, noble, and plebeian, have, without one single exception, offered me obedience, and continue daily to pay me the same deference, which you will own, differs materially from your assertion of their menaced rebellion. I do nothing by compulsion: I condemn no one to death, or to imprisonment, which penalties are the nerves and sinews of a system of terror. I know the kings my neighbours perfectly: the one hates the religion which I profess: I also abhor his faith. Yet despite this, I feel assured that we shall not cease to live in amity. Nevertheless, I have not taken so little heed of my affairs, nor am I so destitute of relations, allies and friends, but that my remedy is promptly at hand if he decided otherwise. My other neighbour is he who sustains my strength, and who is the root of my race, from whence the greatest honour I have is to be an offshoot. This my neighbour abhors not the reformed faith, as you say; but permits its exercise around his person, by the nobles and princes, amongst whom it is my son's happiness to be included; and finally, throughout his kingdom.

You have invented a response for me which I approve, when you assert that I would rather be poor than cease to serve God. Nevertheless, I do not perceive that I am endangering any worldly interest; but, on the contrary, instead of lessening my son's heritage, I augment it, and increase his greatness and honour, by means which every true christian ought to seek. If the spirit of God did not lead me to this conclusion, my common sense would teach me the lesson by an infinity of examples; but more especially, by that of the king, my deceased husband, whose history is known to you from beginning to end, and whom you beguiled by the promise of all those fine crowns which were to be his, if he fought against true religion and his conscience—a fact his death-bed confession testifies; also, the words which he addressed to the queen, protesting that, if he

recovered, he would cause the ministers to preach everywhere throughout France, the doctrines of the reformation. Behold the true fruits of the gospel, which divine mercy perfects in due season! behold how the Eternal Father cares for those in favour of whom his clemency has been invoked.

I blush for you, and feel shame, when you falsely state that so many atrocities have been perpetrated by those of our religion. Pull the mote from your own eye, then shall you see clearly to cast out the beam in your neighbour's eye! Purge the earth first from the blood of so many just men shed by you and yours; take in witness of which the facts that you are well aware I know, of the origin of the first seditions, when patiently, and by the permission of the king and queen, our ministers, according to the edict of January, preached the word of God, when, by the evil counsel of M. le Légat, of the cardinal de Tournon, and of yourself, all this subsequent trouble was concocted; you, aiding your designs by imposing on the easy good nature of the late king, my husband. When I assert this, I do not mean to palliate the evil that has been done under the guise of true religion, to the very great regret of her faithful ministers, and of all worthy persons. I, for one, am most earnest in demanding retribution against those, who thus pollute the true faith, from which pestilential persons, by the grace of God, Béarn shall be exempt, as it has been to the present time, from this and other ills.

I perceive by the description that you adventure upon, that you do not know our ministers; or, at least, that you have not profited greatly by their converse; otherwise, you would know that they preach the necessity of obedience to their temporal rulers, patience, and humility, according to the pattern set them by their great examples, the martyrs and apostles. You state that you do not wish to enter into controversy with us upon a doctrine which I assert is so

true, that you cannot prove its falsity. Herein I agree with you; not because I doubt the sufficiency of our faith, but that I fear I should reap too little profit from the holy desire which possesses me to show you, out of charity and love, the true path to our Sion. You are pleased to assure me that the number of our people is small. I, on the contrary, inform you that our faithful increase daily. As to what you remark respecting the books of the ancient fathers of the church, I hear them constantly quoted by our ministers, and approve them. Nevertheless, I own that I am not learned as I ought to be in this matter; but neither do I believe that you are more competent than myself, having observed that you have always applied yourself more to the study of politics, than to that of divinity. When you state that we have left the true faith to follow the religion of apostates, look to yourself first—you, who have unworthily rejected the holy food with which the late queen, my mother, fed you, before the honours of Rome darkened the eyes of your understanding. We unite in opinion, as you state, on the necessity of studying the Holy Scriptures; but we care not to look beyond. We do not deny that therein are things hard to be understood; but we know that the errors which thereon ensued in the early church, inflicted but a slight wound in comparison to the cancer which now devours your ecclesiastical theory. I agree in all your comments on the Prince of Darkness; and own, that you and yours afford admirable examples of the evil nature which you censure.

As to the difficulty in interpreting the true meaning of the words, "this is my body," Saint Augustine in his treatise against Adamantius, has amply vindicated that matter (as I have learned more by the teaching of our ministers than by study of books), when he says that Jesus Christ made no scruple to name the body when he gave its symbol. I think that our ministers have more profoundly

studied this passage than you, and yours; else you would not fall into the error of asserting that Jesus Christ said before the communion, "Henceforth, I speak no more in parables," when it is manifest by the 13th chapter of St. John, that he uttered those words after the conclusion of His Holy Supper. Turn to the 22nd chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and learn for the future to comprehend a passage before you quote it: an error of the kind, nevertheless, would be excusable in a woman, such as myself; but, *certes, mon cousin,* to see an old cardinal like yourself so ignorant, kindles shame.

You desire to learn in what degree I put confidence in the books of your learned doctors in theology: I reply, in the measure that they take Holy Scripture for their guide and model. I find that the works of Calvin, Bèze, and others, are founded on the word of God. You say, that you wish to refer our ministers to the decision of a general council—a thing which they themselves desire, provided that efficient security of person is guaranteed; they, in demanding this, having before their eyes the examples of John Huss and Jerôme of Prague. I know not where you have learned that there are so many diversities of sects amongst our ministers: though, at the Colloque de Poissy, I became very sensible of your own divisions in doctrine and practice. We have one God, one faith, one law; and the Holy Ghost has promised to be with His Church to the end of time, to bless, and to maintain this faith.

I thank God that I know, without the aid of your teaching, how to serve and please God, the king my sovereign lord, and all other princes, my allies and confederates; all of whom I appreciate better than you can do. I, also, know how to bring up my son, so that, hereafter, he may be great and revered; and to maintain myself in communion with that church, without the pale of which there is no salvation. You request me not to think it strange, or to take in bad part, what you have written. Strange, I do not deem your

words, considering of what order you are; but, as to taking them in bad part, that I do as much as is possible in this world. You excuse yourself, and allege your authority over these countries, as the pope's legate: I receive here no legate, at the price which it has cost France; I acknowledge over me in Béarn only God—to whom I shall render account of the people He has committed to my care. As in no point have I deviated from the faith of God's Holy Catholic church, nor quitted his fold, I bid you keep your tears to deplore your own errors; to the which, out of charity, I will add my own, putting up, at the same time, the most fervent prayer that ever left my lips, that you may be restored to the true fold, and become a faithful shepherd, instead of a hireling. As respects my present enterprises, if you cannot convince me of evil by stronger argument, cease, I pray you, to importune me. I pity, from my heart, your worldly wisdom, which, with the apostle, I deem foolishness before God. He will not disappoint my hopes in Himself; He is not a liar, like men; and He will never desert those who place their trust in His providence. Your doubts, mon cousin, may well make you fear; while my steadfast faith gives me assurance. I must entreat that you will use other language, when next you would have me believe that you address me, impelled, as you affirm, by motives of respect, and by the duty which you say that you owe me; and, likewise, I desire that your useless letter may be the last of its kind.

I have seen that malignant, pernicious, and most seditious letter, which you have thought it expedient to write to mon cousin de Lescar, who is about to answer you. Suffice it for me to inform you that, I perceive that you are determined to bring upon this little country of Béarn, that deluge of misfortune in which you have recently attempted to drown France. You envy our happy condition; the which, being bestowed by our great God and master, He will maintain for us, despite your malicious conspiracies. I pray Him to

pardon your crime; though do I even tremble at the prayer, lest it should be replied to me as to Samuel weeping and interceding for Saul.

From her who knows not how to subscribe herself; being fearful of signing herself your friend, and who even doubts her relationship to you; but whom, in the day of your penitent repentance, you will find,

Votre bonne cousine et amye,

JEHANNE.[1]

This gallant epistle was penned by queen Jeanne, at Villepinte, in Béarn; the assertions in which she indulges, respecting the astute cardinal, filled her loving subjects of the reformed faith with rapture; and such was the enthusiasm her letter created, that many hundreds of copies of d'Armagnac's address, with the queen's reply thereto, were printed and circulated throughout Béarn and Lower Navarre. "Our queen," says Olhagaray,[2] "forbad all religious processions in public; which mandate could not fail to be highly displeasing to her Roman Catholic subjects. The blow stirred up all the Romish clergy; and consternation so greatly obscured their minds, that they knew not to what saint to vow themselves. Some said that it was nought but a feminine freak, which would soon exhaust itself, and be extinguished, as the sun sinks before the shades of night. But the wise providence of God, guiding the hand of our valiant Judith, and quickening her apprehension, raised opportunity for her triumph,

[1] Lettre de la royne de Navarre au Cardinal d'Armagnac—Mém. de Condé, t. IV. Olhagaray, Hist. de Foix, Béarn et Navarre.

[2] Hist. de Foix, Béarn et Navarre.

where neither human wisdom, nor counsel descried ought. The cardinal d'Armagnac was most exasperated, and vowed to arrest our queen in her progress; 'so that,' said he, 'in the midst of the tempest which she has created, and which seems to bear her onwards to triumph and to victory, she shall be plunged into an abyss dark as the most dismal of sepulchres.' Nevertheless, as enterprises are not always well concerted, he miscarried in this his design; and all that he obtained, for his pains, was the famous letter which our queen sent him from Villepinte, where she was sojourning."

Versed in the secrets of the Spanish and Papal councils, the cardinal d'Armagnac meant to utter more than a mere figure of speech, when he spoke the threat against Jeanne d'Albret, recorded above. He intended and hoped to witness its literal fulfilment. The queen's letter, the reply of the bishop of Lescar, and copies of other edicts, recently promulgated by Jeanne, were forwarded without delay to Rome by the cardinal. The bishop of Lescar, intimidated by the menaces of the stern prelate, returned a conciliatory reply, promising to be more orthodox for the future, and to yield as little to the commands of his imperious mistress as seemed consistent with his own safety and the tenure of his see. An assiduous courtier of queen Marguerite d'Angoulême, the bishop's infirmity of purpose had been hidden beneath her potent patronage: for, in company with Lefèvre, Farel, Calvin, and Roussel, the alleged heresy of the bishop of Lescar became absorbed in their greater delinquency—at least in the opinion of his ecclesiastical superiors. Queen Marguerite, besides,

as the bishop pleaded, never proceeded to the extremities which her dauntless daughter had decreed.

The bishop of Lescar, therefore, infirm and wavering in intellect, withdrew from the contest; Jeanne d'Albret fearlessly awaited the result of her defiance of the mandates of the Spanish and Papal courts.

END OF VOL. I.

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